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The Triumph of Art

An Allegory

By

Clarence J. Schilling

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By
Clarence J. Schilling, A.B.
Editor of
The Dakota Catholic

Mark D. Scott, Sioux Falls, S. D.

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DEDICATION

To my dear parents, who have always sought to teach me how to love and seek the true, the good and the beautiful in life; who have done their utmost to give me a proper realization of the fatal materialism and rationalism of the age; who have urged me to keep literature, music and drama, what God meant it to be, the expression of all that is lofty and noble in man—to those loving souls—Father now gone to his reward, and Mother constant and unfailing adviser—this humble effort is tenderly dedicated by the author.

—C. J. S.

Sioux Falls, S. D.
January, 1922.

Nihil Obstat.

Thomas Flynn, V.G.
Adm. Diocese of Sioux Falls.

Sioux Falls, S. D.
January, 1922.

INSPIRATION

The true artist pictures the exquisite things, honor, magnanimity, love and all events, using the outer life as studio and canvas for the scenic art of the soul.—Martin Williston.

* * *

God has employed the sum total of His objective universe to teach men a rather simple lesson. Every best gift, and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights, with Whom there is no change nor shadow of alteration.—W. H. Leary.

* * *

All that the world has ever been enabled to understand and to feel as poetic is the result of a wild effort to reach the beauty above.—Edgar Allen Poe.

* * *

There is an art apart from the world; remotely above the squalid ambitions of men; God-like in its calm strength and peace—an art to which men may look for inspiration and courage and hope.—H. B. Wright.

Sweetness and Light

The pursuit of perfection, then is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and

the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light; it has one even yet greater!—the passion for making them prevail. It is not satisfied until we all come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. Those are the happy moments of humanity, those are the marking epochs of a people's life, those are the flowering times for literature and art, and all the creative power of genius, when there is a national glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thoughts, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be real beauty, real thought, real sweetness, real light. Culture in this way seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and said in the world known and current everywhere; to make all men live on a higher and holier plane—to make reason and the will of GOD prevail.—Matthew Arnold.

FOREWORD

My purpose in writing this short allegory is suggested in the dedication, namely to give my readers in story form a true picture of the sad condition of things in the field of art and literature at the present time. ART, I BELIEVE, IS THE EXPRESSION OF MAN'S SOUL IN TERMS OF TRUTH AND BEAUTY, the message of the Divine speaking in Nature, voicing itself in literature, drama, painting, sculpture and music—in short in anything which man calls a fine art.

At the present time men have either never known or have forgotten the true principles and purpose of art. The age of Materialism, Commercialism and Irreligion disregards all the fine qualities of this God-given blessing; it disregards the truths and beauties, which alone can make art sublime and noble, and lead men's souls to higher things, and thus makes of art a mockery. Instead of artistic and aesthetic masterpieces today we are greeted everywhere with literary and dramatic trash, dramas utterly devoid of anything inspiring and ennobling; cubist and futurist daubings called art; ragtime and jazz atrocities called music, and instead of being despised by a sane and healthy-minded people with rational souls, these things are

welcomed and enjoyed by a public whose taste is rapidly becoming perverted.

I have always had a great love for literary and dramatic work, and have since my earliest childhood admired music, painting and sculpture. I am therefore shocked to see the sad condition of affairs in the world today. I am shocked to see the progress the Bolshevist element is making, and I determined to do my "bit" to help check it. I regret that I have not the literary ability or picturing power of a master. If I had, I would seek to preach this message to all mankind, young and old, so that everyone would be taught; that I would be able to crush with one blow the debasing power and influence of the spirit of the age.

The matter I present is above your criticism, for it is the unchangeable doctrine of truth. The manner in which I present it—O, let that be beneath your criticism!

I have given you my message in story form so that it will interest even the young folks. The characters are named for the forces they represent in life. You have met everyone of them. They come into each one's life sooner or later, as they have into mine.

My most earnest wish is that this humble attempt to express my inmost thoughts may bear at least some fruit, that some of my

readers will understand more clearly the evil influences of the age in which we live, and that they will be led to search for true art at all times, so that the Spirit of Nature and the sweet and wholesome Inspiration of Religion may triumph as they do in my little story. If this humble effort accomplishes something in this direction, I shall feel very happy in knowing that I have performed a good work in the interest of true Art. May she ever remain a pure, undefiled gift of Nature to gladden and elevate the hearts of men!

—The Author.

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SYNOPSIS.

Talent, a gifted young man, the son of hard-working, conscientious, noble-minded parents, completes his college course and is ready to go out into the world, and take up literary work as a profession. The youth has been trained in virtue as well as science, and he goes forth well fortified to cope with all the enemies of his soul and the opponents of true Art.

His uncle, who is a noted literary man in the city, induces the young man to come to him and work in his studio, a hot-bed of materialistic and atheistic literature and art. Here Talent meets all the forces for evil which threaten the life and success of art at the present time. He refuses the various offers extended to him, rejects gold, honors, fame and social distinctions, which are to be exchanged for the prostitution of all that is worthwhile in art, and eventually refuses to work for his uncle under any consideration.

During the course of Talent's sojourn in the city, he is entertained by the children of the Age and Laxity, his uncle and aunt, and is given every opportunity of enjoying the pleasures of the rich and worldly. However he becomes disgusted with the crimes of the people, and longing for his art which he knows

he can never find in Temptation City, he hurries off to the mountains and lives for some time in seclusion.

Some time later he finds the ideal of his dreams, a beautiful young maiden, who proves to be his inspiration. He marries the girl and together they begin a wonderful play called "The Triumph of Art," which produces a marvelous effect on the people of Temptation City. The real secret of success, however, is the assistance and advise of the good old parish priest who teaches the world the necessity of returning to the old faith, the all-saving consolation of religion.

On the night of the opening performance of Talent's play, "The Triumph of Art", his uncle also produces a new play called "The Triumph of Mammon" in his own theater just across the street. The latter is a debasing musical spectacle, more daring than anything of its kind. While the play is in progress a fire breaks out in the theater operated by the uncle and nearly all the performers and spectators meet a terrible death in the flames.

The sobering effects of the catastrophe and the good influence of the play produced by Talent on the same night, bring about the rejuvenation of art in Temptation City. The people no longer care for the irreligious and

salacious plays and literature which have so long made up the bulk of their entertainment. The city is converted and peace and prosperity reign.

Talent and his bride live to a good old age, and they continue to turn out various works of art to the delight of thousands of friends and patrons. They are honored by the citizens of the vicinity as the saviours of a fallen art.

CHARACTERS APPEARING IN THE STORY

TALENT, our hero—endowed with rare gifts of body and soul, who seeks and finds the good, true and beautiful in Art.

TOIL—his father, faithful, generous and prudent.

SELF-SACRIFICE—His mother, kind, loving and unselfish.

ENCOURAGEMENT—The orator at Excelsior College, who urges all young men to go forth and lead good, pure and useful lives.

DISCOURAGEMENT AND PESSIMISM—Who seek to discourage the youth's just and righteous ambition, and destroy the confidence he has in himself.

HOPE—Talent's good old grandmother, who expects great things from him.

FAILURE AND FATALISM—Who never do and never can hope for anything but misfortune.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE—Talent's rich uncle, who commercializes and materializes Art, and upon whom the Breath of the Divine is lost.

LAXITY—Talent's aunt, in whom the concept of true wifehood and motherhood has been stifled.

WISDOM—The good parish priest who represents God in a God-less age.

CONSCIENCE—Constant companion of Talent, and never-failing adviser.

THE SPIRIT OF SELF—Eldest son of the Age, the embodiment of egotism and self-interest.

SENSUALITY—Another son of the Age, who lives only to gratify his animal appetites.

INTEMPERANCE—Another son of the Age, whose idol is liquor.

HYPOCRISY—Youngest son of the Age, who veils his corrupt nature behind a cloak of righteousness.

FRIVOLITY—Daughter of the Age, who loves idleness and senseless diversion.

PLEASURE—Another daughter of the Age, lover and seeker of material joy to the exclusion of all else.

MATERIALISM—The modern novelist, who is a literary scavenger.

IRRELIGION—The modern short-story writer, whose stories breathe the message of a God-less world.

ATHEISM—The modern dramatist, who ridicules the Divine.

REALISM—The modern illustrator, who sketches the shameless subject.

RAGTIME—The modern composer, producer of debasing musical shows.

SUGGESTIVISM—The modern poetess, originator of fickle verse.

THE SPIRIT OF GREED—A friend of the Age, whose all-absorbing thought is the "almighty dollar."

FAME—Another friend of the Age, who delights in accepting public honors and the flattery of critics.

SOCIAL DISTINCTION—Another friend of the Age, who sacrifices all for a place among the upper "smart set."

THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAUTIFUL—Talent's life-mate, collaborator with him in the masterpiece: "Triumph of Art."

THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION—A priest of God, who appears to our hero and heroine to encourage them in their work.

TALENT—OUR HERO

TALENT—OUR HERO

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."
—Shakespeare.

It was commencement day at Excelsior College, and everything was gay and bright. The college auditorium where the exercises were being held was artistically decorated with the class colors and flowers of the fortunate young men, who were soon to receive their degrees.

The hall was filled to overflowing with happy parents and dear friends who had come to congratulate the graduates on this their great day. The class members themselves were assembled in an artistic group on the little stage, and were anxiously waiting for the exercises to begin. They had longed for this day. The thought of this day had served to encourage them many a time during their long course when they had been sorely tempted to give up. Life looked very sweet to all of them now, for there was not one in the crowd but expected to go out into the world on the morrow and put his knowledge and training to good advantage; to become a shining light in some part of the business or professional world.

And the future looked gay and bright to us at one time, when we received our diplomas and left the sanctified walls of our "alma mater" to face the world.

There was one young man among the graduates in whom we are especially interested. I shall call him Talent, and he might have lived in any day and age. In fact he lives today, and will live as long as God continues to create. He had finished the required course at the head of his class and had been selected to deliver the valedictory. His special gifts lay in the departments of drama and literature, but he had loved and admired all the fine arts from his earliest youth. At his graduation his ambition was to go out into the world and make the study of literature and drama a profession. And in his youthful enthusiasm he had pictured himself at the summit of perfection in his chosen field, even as you and I pictured ourselves at the height of our profession when we graduated.

Talent was the only son of Toil and Self-Sacrifice, noble, God-fearing parents, who knew what it meant to have entrusted to their keeping, "one of those little ones, whom Jesus loved." Realizing their responsibility, they endeavored to fulfill their obligations toward their son, and reared and trained him well for his

battle with life. Themselves deprived of the benefits of higher education, they determined to do all in their power to provide for their gifted offspring, and to enable him to get the training which had been denied them.

When the time came, therefore they sent him to Excelsior college, a flourishing institution near home where religion and morality were taught just as well as the secular branches, and where excellence in scholarship and application was deemed more important than prowess on the athletic field or grace of bearing on the ball room floor.

It meant an added sacrifice for the good parents to send their boy to school. Toil had to work even harder than before and Self-Sacrifice had to be content with the old, faded gown of the year before, but after all, the success and happiness, and perchance the soul of their darling boy were at stake, so they willingly endured the added hardship. Even as many fond fathers and mothers do today, even perhaps as yours and mine did, so did the parents of Talent suffer privations, that their boy might be trained and fitted for his life work.

The good parents had bequeathed to their beloved son the richest legacy in the world, a single standard of morality, the fear and love

of God, and an upright and noble character. They had always idolized this boy of theirs and he, instead of becoming selfish as so many do, appreciated their love and devotion; he understood their kindness and disinterested generosity, and tried to repay them by making the best of his opportunities at school and utilizing his time to good advantage.

Talent had been the most popular student in the class. He had been very active in all the literary and dramatic events in the college, and had for some time been the director of the dramatic society. He loved the drama and knew it was the expression of man's soul and mind on the speaking stage. His love for literature, music and painting had also enabled him to become proficient in these departments. In short he was a lover and admirer of the beautiful. He felt that this world was a very delightful place. He was convinced that one could find beauty, and truth, and love anywhere in the universe if one but chose to look for it. This quest for the beautiful was part of his religion, for only the good could be truly beautiful. Sin was something essentially ugly and therefore could never be beautiful no matter how it was disguised. This doctrine was the foundation of his

education at Excelsior College, and it formed the gist of his speech on his graduation day.

The idealistic world as pictured by Talent, the innocent youth of my story, is indeeed a delightful place. Sheltered as he had been in the sacred shrine of home, protected by the sheltering walls of his Alma Mater, he could not know anything of the world of Materialism as it exists today. He had not dreamed that beyond his own happy little world there existed the forces of the Spirit of the World, Sensuality, Hypocrisy and others of their kind, who interpreted the message of art in a way much different from our hero. He was soon to discover this to his sorrow.

At the proper moment Talent rose to deliver his valedictory. I shall not quote from it, but merely say that it was a beautiful and inspiring composition. In it he bade a fond and touching farewell to the dear college, Excelsior, and its zealous professors. He thanked the latter for their interest in the class, their devotion to duty, their kindness and unselfishness. At the end he addressed a plea to the young men assembled on the rostrum. He urged them to remember the training they had received, and to be faithful at all times to their college.

The inspirational text he chose, around which

to shape his arguments was the sublime passage of the master mind, Shakespeare:

"To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

The speech was greeted by a thunder of well-merited applause, and all the class members surged forward to grasp the hand of the young orator, who had expressed their sentiments so appropriately in this last message to the old college. Immediately the orator of the evening, whom I shall call Encouragement, rose to deliver the baccalaureate address. It was after the manner of speeches on such occasions, and I shall merely mention a few of the main items which have a bearing on this story. He said in part:

"Now, my dear graduates, Your Alma Mater bids you 'Au Revoir; Auf Wiedersehen', and gives you her blessing. She expects you to go into the world and fight with all the vigor of young manhood, the spirit of materialism, rationalism and atheism. She has fortified you against the insidious snares of a perverted world. O, never allow yourselves to be led from the path of righteousness and duty, never permit the Spirit of the Age to claim you as a disciple.

You have the concept of true art, namely the expression of the good, the true and the beautiful; you have studied the message of Nature. O, never let that message be transformed into the hideous phantasm which the present age sacrilegiously calls Art. Art, whether it be in the department of literature, drama, music, painting, sculpture, or any thing else esthetic, is the expression of Man's soul in terms of truth and beauty. May you ever foster true Art and teach the world the meaning of what is really beautiful.

"Always remember the beautiful words of Tennyson describing the knight, "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure," I shall close with those fitting words of the poet which so beautifully describe the hopes and ambitions of a young man who is ready to face the world like yourselves:

"O River of to-morrow, I uplift
Mine eyes and thee I follow, as the night wanes
into morning
Still follow, follow sure to meet the sun
And, confident that what the future yields
Will be the right, unless myself be wrong."

Thus ended the speech, and when the other ceremonies were over and Talent had received

the congratulations of his friends, he turned to his dear parents, Toil and Self-Sacrifice. He was not ashamed of them, because they were a trifle old-fashioned. He was proud to introduce them to his teachers and friends, even though his father's hands were callous and his mother's dress faded. He tried to tell them of his gratitude, and his appreciation, but they silenced him by saying, that the way he could repay them for their sacrifices, was to be faithful to the training he had received.

The next moment two old men, ugly and slovenly in appearance, came forward to speak to our hero. The names of the two old men were Discouragement and Pessimism. They had not a word to say about his success or his bright hopes for the future, but scowling and sneering they remarked:

"Those were fine words, my young enthusiast, but the world is not like you picture it. There is nothing good in the universe, nothing bright and hopeful to cheer the hearts of men, and in all our years on earth we have never yet discovered anything really beautiful. As for Truth, we ask with Pilate of old, 'What is Truth?' You will find to your regret, that your doctrine is not practical."

As if to counteract the evil effect of their

words, our hero's aged Grandmother came up and congratulated him. Her name was Hope, and she immediately pointed out to the youthful artist that even though there are many wicked and ugly things in the world, there are also many beautiful and sublime things if one but learn how and where to look for them. She promised that Talent would eventually be successful in his search for Art, if he but remembered the training he had received from his parents and teachers.

And surely we can all remember when Pessimism and Hope contended for the mastery of our own natures. Talent, though inclined to be a trifle discouraged because of the promptings of Pessimism, felt himself strengthened and exalted on account of the promises of Hope.

Our hero went to his home and gradually worked into the daily routine to which his parents were accustomed. He saw something to admire in everything. All the works of Nature, all the actions of man were considered by him through the eyes of Idealism. He looked about him to find a department of Art in which he could best make use of the wonderful gifts which Nature had given him. His parents dissuaded him from suddenly adopting one or the other profession, without a consideration of its draw-

backs. They knew his inexperience and innocence, and waited for the right opportunity to come which would give him his start.

Time went on and Talent had not begun his life work. The worldly wise, Failure and Fatalism shook their heads and said,

"He will never amount to anything. He is a genius but he cannot make use of his gifts. There is no room in this world for a dreamer."

Hope merely waited and said, "He will succeed. He will seize Opportunity when it comes. Let us have patience."

One day Talent received a letter from his uncle, the Spirit of the Age, who was a noted literary man, living in the great city many miles away. The letter came as a great surprise, for the two families had not been on very intimate terms for many years. They had lived apart and owing to a very different view of life taken by the Spirit of the Age and his family the good parents of our hero had not deemed it advisable to hold communication with them. The uncle for his part had no regard for the conscience-loving people in the smaller town and so they had not seen each other for many a year. In fact the uncle had not seen Talent since he was a baby.

The letter read as follows:

Dear Nephew Talent:—

You will no doubt be surprised to receive this letter from your uncle in the big city, who has not seen you for many a day. I recently heard of your graduation, of your wonderful progress in your studies and also of your remarkable aptitude along literary and dramatic lines. Now I need just such a promising young man here in my office and will be glad to offer you every opportunity to advance in the field of literature and drama in which I am especially interested.

Come to the city as soon as possible and I will do all I can for you. I will take you into my house and make you one of the family. I will give you all the practical hints of the trade for I know them all, and I can show you how to adapt your rather idealistic ideas to present circumstances. It is the opportunity of a life time and I hope you will avail yourself of it.

Yours,
SPIRIT OF THE AGE,
Temptation City.

Talent was delighted when he received this friendly epistle from his hitherto rather unfriendly uncle in the great city. To him it meant a long-looked for opportunity to begin

his life work and of course he could not know the temptations that would beset him, nor the false teachings of the Age. To his parents it brought both hope and dismay. They also saw in it an opportunity for their son to launch his craft on the sea of life, a chance to take up a profession; but they also saw the inevitable dangers which would surround him on every side in the big city.

After due consideration and upon the advice of the good parish priest an old friend of the family whom I shall call Wisdom, it was finally decided that Talent should accept the offer. Wisdom however ordered that Conscience, the faithful servant of the family, who had watched over Talent from his earliest childhood, should accompany the young man to the city, to act as adviser and guide.

Wisdom warned him against many of the snares which he would find in the big city, Temptation; and told him to follow the dictates of Conscience in all things; to remain faithful to his religion, and to the lofty ideal he had set for himself as expressed in his graduation speech.

The parting between Talent and his parents was sweet and touching. His father, Toil, told him to remember always that there is a God,

Who sees everything we do, even the most secret and hidden deeds. His mother, Self-Sacrifice, admonished him to do the right at any cost, and keep his heart pure and his immortal soul free from all blemish. She gave him as keep-sake a little poem:

"Thou'rt like a tender floweret,
Innocent and pure and fair;
I gaze on thee with joy, and yet
'Tis not without a shade of care;
It seems to me I needs must lay
My hand upon thy head and pray
That God will keep thee as thou art
So innocent and pure of heart."

Before taking leave of their son the good parents gave him a little silver chest, which bore the name 'Memory'. It contained the pictures of his parents and a short note:

"Whenever you see this little chest, remember your parents, and the lessons they have taught you, and when tempted to do wrong think of this:

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

Talent promised to take good care of himself and to remember the exhortations of his kind parents and benefactors. He determined to heed

the admonitions of Conscience in all things. He took one last view of the peaceful little village of Tranquility in which he had been born and raised and in which he had spent so many happy days. Finally he boarded the train and was off for the great city which was to be his future home, the big metropolis which I have called Temptation City, the stronghold of the Spirit of the Age, and Sensuality, Pleasure, and Selfishness. In the midst of this whirlpool of life and adventure our hero was to begin his career. In it he was to be sorely tried; in it he was to be offered all the allurements and enticements which could possibly appeal to a young man, and from it he was to receive the experience which would cause him to view life in a new light.

As he neared his destination his heart beat wildly in happy anticipation of the joys and delights which would be his. How could he know of the sorrows and disappointments. And even as you and I have left the quiet village of Tranquility and sought joys and pleasures in the noisy and boisterous city of Temptation, so did Talent seek them on this day.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

I walked in the world with the worldly,
I craved what the world ne'er gave,
And I said, "In the world each Ideal
That shines like a star on Life's wave,
Is wrecked on the shores of the Real,
And sleeps like a dream in a grave."
—Rev. A. J. Ryan.

In due time Talent and his companion, Conscience, reached Temptation City and were met at the depot by the Spirit of the Age, who gave them a hearty welcome, and immediately proceeded to show them the beauties of the great metropolis. To Talent who had been brought up in the quiet little village of Tranquility, the city seemed indeed a wonderful place. He gazed at its pomp and grandeur with rapture. The tall buildings, the hustle and bustle of the traffic, the eager crowds of people hurrying to and fro, some in search of business enterprises, other seeking pleasure; all this excitement and activity, seemed very wonderful to Talent. He was not to know until later that hustle, commotion and excitement do not always bring peace and joy.

The Age escorted the youth to an expensive

restaurant and ordered a sumptuous dinner. This gilded palace itself seemed to the inexperienced Talent, a veritable wonderland. Its furnishings, lights, decorations and music dazzled the youth who had had never beheld anything to compare with them, while the eager throng of pleasure seekers, oblivious to everything but the delights of the senses, appeared to Talent to be a very happy crowd of individuals. How could he know this was not real joy, or that among these gay folks are sometimes to be found the most unfortunate and most unhappy people in the world?

Notwithstanding the impression the city made on the village boy, the picture he had in his mind of the peaceful village of Tranquility nestling so cosily at the side of the mountain, presented itself now, with startling vividness. Here there was no babbling brook, no song of the birds, no pretty sun-set, no pleasant greeting between fellow-creatures; nothing but noise and hurry and excitement and not a friendly word of encouragement to make Life's journey more pleasant. Here he heard only the harsh whistles of the factories, the deafening shrieks of street car wheels, the cry for money, the feverish shouts of revellers, and once in a whole a groan from some unfortunate, whose life in

the city was becoming unbearable, who heard the call of the great outdoors, and could not answer it.

Soon after they had dined, Talent was taken to the mansion of the Age. Here he was to meet his uncle's family, and here he was to make his home for some time. His aunt, I shall call Laxity—she was a typical wife of the Age. She appeared to be a very stylish and cultured lady, but Talent could not help but observe the difference between her and his own good mother, Self-Sacrifice. Laxity was very much of this world. She loved the city and its excitement, took great delight in social functions, loved to be at the head of the upper classes, and was an ardent Suffragist, New-Thought advocate, Sex-Hygiene enthusiast, and in general an intellectual faddist. Her duties in the home did not concern her much, nor did the training of her children cause her much anxiety. She felt that they were able to direct themselves.

The children of this well matched pair were six in number, and as they figure quite prominently in the history of our hero's activities, I shall say a few words concerning each one.

The first was called the Spirit of Self, who inherited all of his father's selfishness, and all of his mother's ambition. He knew nothing of

charity or brotherly love, and sought but the eternal "Ego", and was never content if he imagnied anyone to be in any way his superior. He would sacrifice any ideal or principle, disregard character, and virtue, to accomplish this end. His father praised him and said that the spirit of the times demanded that everyone provide for himself.

The next child was the Spirit of Sensuality, who loved and sought only what was pleasing and agreeable to the senses. He enjoyed good times, in fact he cared for nothing else. He nad plenty of money, provided by his indulgent and foolish parents, and therefore he could follow his idol to his heart's content. He took part in all kinds of amusements, ate frequently and in large quantities and in short did what the irrational animals do, lived only to gratify his senses.

Next came Intemperance, whose idol was the liquor bottle. He had started to drink when quite young, had fallen in with bad company, and as his parents had not checked his downward course he had gone from bad to worse until he was now a stylish but hopeless drunkard.

The last son was called Hypocrisy—the most attractive of all the boys. He believed in the

doctrine that a virtuous exterior hides a multitude of sins, and so he was known as a model young man. He claimed to be interested in the reform of humanity, and to all appearances did much for his erring brethren, but he was in more need of reform than many of those he claimed to help. However, the signs of the times demands a good appearance, regardless of interior vice or virtue.

The daughters were Pleasure and Frivolity, both exact counterparts of their mother, Laxity. Pleasure was like many of her fellow creatures, interested in the material joys of the world, with never a thought of the higher life. She was young, handsome and talented, and therefore saw no necessity of doing or seeking anything serious. Her parents idolized her and gave her every joy which money could buy, many of which were positively harmful.

Frivolity, the youngest daughter, was the pet of the family, and was very much like her sister, with the one exception, that she would not even give herself the trouble to seek the greatest joys. She took everything as a matter of course. She was an ardent admirer of the shallow literature and drama of her day, and in short sought every idle fancy and senseless diversion which came her way. The newest

fads in styles, art, and recreation were her chief considerations.

* * *

Such was the family in which our hero had been placed. These worldlings were to mould his character and teach him the real purpose and aim of life. Later that night, Talent had a long talk with his uncle about their plans for the future.

"Why did you bring that bore, Conscience with you?" asked his uncle. "He will not be able to help you here in the city."

"He has always been a faithful companion to me and our family," replied Talent, "besides our good parish priest, Wisdom, advised me to be sure and have him near me at all times."

"Those priests have such old-fashioned ideas," answered his uncle. "I have learned to disregard their stupid admonitions, and I am sure you will in time do the same. You will soon grow tired of having Conscience tag after you all over the city. Tomorrow I shall take you down to my office and introduce you to my friends and co-workers whom you will like, I am sure. You will then be ready to start your literary work, in which I am certain you will make great progress, for I have heard much about your skill at school. You know it is my

purpose to have you write stories for my magazine, which is called "The Cosmopolite." It is read by the majority of people in the whole country. It is really the magazine of the masses. It gives the people just what they want. As soon as you become accustomed to your new surroundings and have seen something of this great city of ours, I shall expect you to write a number of short stories for this magazine. I want something that you can call real Art. I know that after you have seen some of my work, you will understand just what I want.

"Now your ideals may be just a trifle too lofty for our work, for you know nowadays people have no love for sermons, morality stories, and the like. You must conform to popular taste, but I know you will understand better when you have visited my office."

"By the way here is a copy of one of my late books, it is a best seller, and created quite a commotion when it first came out. The people fairly went wild about it. I will leave it here for you to read at your leisure." So saying the uncle left Talent and hurried off to his business.

Talent looked at the book which his uncle had written. It was a trashy, salacious sex problem story, just the kind the world accepts with eagerness at the present time. Talent was

dumbfounded. He could not believe his eyes.

"Is this what my uncle writes?" he said to himself. "Is this art? And am I to devote my time and talents to the production of such filth?"

"God forbid," answered the ever watchful Conscience who remained near his master.

"If this is what the people want," exclaimed Talent, "then I fear I can never become a popular writer." However, he determined not to judge too hastily. He would wait to see what the morrow would bring.

That night, before Talent retired to rest in the elaborately furnished room in his uncle's home, he took out the little silver chest, and gazed long and tenderly at the photographs of his parents. Surely, he thought, they would not wish him to become a disseminator of such trash which his uncle had written, and called Art. Surely too the good priest who had given him his final blessing would never sanction such work.

He brought forth the motto which his parents had given him and read:

"To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

He was to be sorely tried during the ensuing weeks but he meant to be faithful to this motto at any cost, and to keep near him at all times, the ever-watchful friend, Conscience. Surely these would keep him in the path of righteousness.

And you and I and all of us have been sorely tried in Temptation City, and the same allurements, which were placed before Talent, were also placed before us. If we have been wise, we have also kept near at hand the ever-watchful Conscience, to guide us to the right.

* * *

The next morning found our hero, Talent, in his uncle's commodious appartments downtown, where his several co-workers labored to produce novels, short stories, plays and all kinds of literary trash for the "people who wanted that kind." Talent was then introduced to the men who helped his uncle. I shall describe them as follows:

First came Materialism, the novelist and short story writer who like the Age gave the public the seamy, unreal, suggestive and sensational fiction which it eagerly devoured. He said:

"I do not believe in any particular religion, nor in a God in the sense in which you under-

stand Him. I believe that everyone is his own God and his own religion. Man is placed on this earth (how—I do not know, nor do I care), to get as much joy out of life as he can, and after death, comes annihilation. I write stories that please the people, and in return they give me money which brings pleasure to me."

"Art is what the people make it and the craving for my kind of literature is increasing, so I shall continue to give it to them. Here are some of my latest works." And the Spirit of Materialism presented to the disgusted Talent several of his books, all on the same order, all of them advocating free love, divorce, double morality, pleasure cult, birth control, and dozens of other equally pernicious doctrines, poisonous opiates for society.

Next came Irreligion, a friend and companion of Materialism, who at one time had been a good, pure young man like our hero; but he had left home early in life, attended schools where the name of God and the least mention of religion had been carefully omitted. He now believed in nothing but the present life, and determined to get as much pleasure out of his present existence as possible. He was the head short story writer of the Cosmopolite magazine, the great fiction publication which had

millions of subscribers on its list. Irreligion demonstrated his ability in the realm of fiction by presenting to the shocked gaze of our hero a dozen or more of his masterpieces. They were "spicy stories, full of ginger," he told Talent. They were read by young and old, in crowded restaurants, on trains, at home. Young men and women read them while riding to and from their work, society ladies read them during their relaxation periods between social functions, college students read them behind locked doors. In short they were for the masses.

These masterpieces, which Irreligion had produced for the big magazine, were on the same order as all the other publications of the Age and were samples of the work he wished Talent to produce, as soon as the latter had learned to conform his lofty ideals to modern times. They covered a variety of subjects, but were for the most part adventure stories about some "misfit in society" in his or her downward course to moral decay and destruction. They were extremely suggestive or openly immoral, accompanied usually by fitting illustrations, which made the story of sin and vice all the more vivid and attractive. This same gifted writer also told Talent that the abominable divorce scandals and questionable escapades of

notorious women, which were so realistically described in the feature sections of the Sunday papers were also products of his facile pen.

"This is the age of the short story," explained Irreligion as he gazed at his productions and fondly fingered them over. "People in the world today are too busy for long novels, they want short stories with 'go' in them, and plenty of 'kick'. If they do read long novels they want them in serial form and thus you see the great possibilities for the magazine of fiction. People have no time for serious thoughts, they care not for religion, philosophy, science, travel, or any kind of heavy reading. This is the age of pleasure and frivolity, and you will have to conform to their way of thinking if you ever expect to become a successful writer."

Talent could hardly believe his eyes and ears. He could not understand the meaning of this false idea of Art, nor the materialistic conception of the world, and life as presented by these two exponents of the literary world. To Talent, Art had always been something sacred, something with which to express man's higher motives and ambitions, and the ideals of the soul, and now in his uncle's studio he found men who actually termed themselves artists, literary men, who did not believe in a God, who cared

nothing for morality, who misunderstood Art, and transformed her into a hideous spectre, unrecognizable, for their own selfish interests. Talent was dumbfounded, but he was to see even more.

The next man to be introduced to our hero was Atheism, who though in most respects was like the other gentlemen just described, yet in this particular, was different—that he openly denied the existence of God, and dared to give the public, stories and plays, brim full of Godless love, Godless adventure and Godless activities of all kinds, and even ridiculed those who did profess any religion.

He showed Talent some of his latest plays, a travesty on Christ, crucified, and a stinging satire on the Christian martyrs, a farce built around some fundamental doctrine of God's Church.

"These will be the 'hit' of the season, they will take the people off their feet.—Nowadays, you know, no one takes these things seriously, no one takes the Bible for anything more than a highly colored piece of fiction. Why not give the public a lively play based on one of these themes?

Talent felt that he was now prepared for anything. He would never have believed that

in this wonderful city he would find anyone who would boldly assert that the Bible was merely a piece of fiction, or that Christ was not God. He was amazed and bitterly disappointed at the discovery. He determined that if things kept on in this way he would soon leave the city and give up his ambitious to discover Art, rather than sacrifice his faith, his religion and morality in such a place.

Now there came another co-worker of the Age, one whom I have called Realism. He acted as illustrator for the literary men. He drew the very suitable pictures for their "shady" stories. Not only this, but the flashy covers of of the various magazines, the would-be comic supplement of the Sunday paper, as well as the gaudy and impure poster, art-panels, post-cards and the like, which the Age disposed of at a very low price, were all productions of this pervert.

"I will show you some of my work," he said as he opened his portfolio of sketches. They were for the most part immodest, meaningless as to theme, shallow attempts to interest the people in a kind of art all its own.

"You see," he explained to Talent, "People are not seriously inclined anymore. They want things represented in art as they really are. If I am to represent man as he really is, I must

make my pictures portray him as the idle, frivolous, fickle and often sensual thing which in reality he is. I must picture the real, human side of life, you know."

Talent was learning to put a just estimate on the artistic activities of the Age, and his company. He was yet to see how the grand gift of song could be misused and wrongly applied by these base imitators.

"I am Ragtime," said another of the artists in the studio of the Age. "I am the official producer of the famous musical shows you have heard so much about. I have had wonderful success with my 'Jollies' a series of daring musical comedies, which very much delight the people at the present time. There is not much to my productions to recommend them, but you know people don't want anything heavy nowadays." And Ragtime winked significantly.

Talent looked through the portfolios of Ragtime to see the nature of the entertainment he was giving the public. The plays were veritable riots of suggestive, syncopated music, interwoven with a liberal supply of jokes with a "kick," whose personnel was made up of plenty of pretty girls, possessing neither talent or ability, but able, by their daring costumes and suggestive poses, to interest and amuse the people of Temp-

tation City. Ragtime was also the producer of many acts for the vaudeville circuits, and these were no better morally and artistically than the longer shows. All were debasing and demoralizing, and baneful above all to the young people of both sexes who attended their presentation.

Talent saw that the songs and repartee of these programs were salacious, vicious and abounding in double meanings and constant hits at things utterly disgusting to a normal mind. Ragtime told our hero that many of the performances were intended for presentation at the various roof gardens of the city where "wine, woman and song," formed the keynote of the festivity. In these shows, Talent was made to understand that the chorus was as undressed as the law would allow. Situations and dance formations, which would have been disgraceful in the jungle, the inspiration of which came from the underworld, were staged with attractive and alluring lights and settings, so that the half intoxicated revellers might feast unto satiety upon this carnival of flesh.

"But," remonstrated Talent, "surely this is not Art. This is something base and degrading and Art is something beautiful and inspiring."

"You must think we are arranging entertainment for a crowd of Quakers," answered Rag-

time, "I tell you this is the spirit of the times. The people want it, and they are willing to pay for it. Every hundred years we produce a strictly moral play, at a great financial loss, just to show people we want to do the right thing. For the rest, all we can say, is that the people are ones who dictate the quality of our shows."

Talent was utterly disgusted and wished to hurry away, but his Uncle stopped him and said:

"Before you go, I should like to have you meet the lady who composes the pretty poems of passion, and the free verse which are so popular in the world today. She will collaborate with you in the production of the periodical I spoke about before."

And the Age brought forth Suggestivism, who read for Talent one of her latest compositions. It was, as could be expected, the product of a diseased mind ,one given to feeding itself on inartistic trash, and immoral filth. She also read to Talent a specimen of free verse, which the society women were studying with a vim at this time. It was irregular, nonsensical ,obscure as to meaning—but it was all the rage—which covered a multitude of faults.

All during these scenes, the ever-watchful Conscience had remained close to Talent, and ever and anon did he whisper a warning into his master's ear. Finally Talent said to the Age:

"Oh Uncle, let us go; all this is distasteful to me. I can never devote my talents to such work. My God! Is this the expression of man's soul? If this is indeed Art, then I hope sincerely that I shall never be able to write a play or a novel. It is the saddest disappointment of my young life to see such a state of affairs, when I expected the very opposite. My dream has been shattered. Let us go!"

"You will soon change your mind, my child," answered the uncle. Why try to hold out against the common consent of mankind? They want this sort of thing, and we must give it to them. You cannot afford to be a prude. You must conform to the tastes of society."

"Uncle, you seem to forget, that man is the image of his Maker, and that in order to paint man as he really is, you must not neglect to portray the spiritual side of him. Even though man has many weaknesses and faults, he is still the image of the Maker, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Art should be expression of all that lofty and sublime and noble in man, and that side of him you omit entirely. You claim to know life, yet when you paint it, you omit the lights, and show only the shadows.

"After you have seen more of the world you will change your ideas," retorted the Age, as he

hurried away. Talent hastened away from the studio of the Age, and went to his room, where once more he sought his precious chest, Memory, and read and reread the motto: "To thine own self be true."

Our hero's initiation into the sanctum of modernized Art and its demands, was not especially gratifying to himself nor to his uncle. The latter felt sure, however, that this conservatism of his nephew, was only the result of his "untra-esthetic training," as he styled it, and would in time wear off.

"I don't believe the young man has seen the world yet, or its pleasures and lights and joys. No wonder he talks like a Puritan," was the comment of the Age to his wife the following morning. "I shall have some of our children take him out and interest him in the wonders of our city. Surely he cannot fail to be moved by the pleasures of the times. If he would only rid himself of that pest, Conscience, who seems to cling to him always, then there might be some hope. That bore keeps near him and preaches morality at every turn."

The Age took pains to leave the last copy of his trashy magazine in a conspicuous place in Talent's room. The uncle felt sure that Talent could write a fine story or article, for he heard

much about his ability in school. The main thing now, he felt was to alter the lad's taste and make Talent devote his gifts to the interests of the Age; sacrifice his rare gifts to promote the cause of Irreligion, Greed and Immorality.

And you and I, and all of us, if we have gifts of mind and soul, may feel tempted to prostitute them before the shrines of this Age; and unless we also have a chest, called Memory, to remind us of the high hopes and expectations of our parents and teachers; unless we have also taken as our motto a noble and inspiring thought such as "To thine own self be true," we may succumb to this temptation.

But because Talent had kept Conscience near him; because he remembered what his parents and teachers expected of him; because of his motto, "To thine own self be true," he did remain faithful to the inspiration of true Art.

O TEMPORA! O MORES!

THE SPIRIT OF SELF

THE SPIRIT OF SELF

"Life is all void,
On selfish thoughts alone employed."
—Jane Taylor.

Know that the love of thyself is more hurtful to thee than anything else in the world.
—Thomas a' Kempis.

Talent was shocked at the attitude his uncle had taken on questions of literature and art. His own taste for the sublime and the good, had been cultivated with watchful care by the good professors at Excelsior College, and before that by his conscientious parents. His faith taught him that man is the image of the Maker, and that since Art is the expression of the soul, it must under no circumstances contain anything contrary to the highest aspirations of the soul; it must be a yearning for the Divine; it must be an attempt to express as far as possible the goodness and beauty of a most perfect God, who contains in Himself all perfections in the highest degree.

Our hero felt that the city, which demanded the prostitution of Art to suit the demands of a perverted race, must be essentially bad.

However he would not judge too rashly. He would see more of it before condemning it. Perhaps the little territory around his uncle's studio was bad and the rest was good. He would see.

When therefore the Spirit of Self, the eldest son of the Age came into the room and invited Talent to go out with him, the youth accepted the invitation with alacrity. This would give him an opportunity to see more of the wonderful city, and to judge its aspirations and ambitions. Perhaps he would yet discover some good qualities which would far surpass the evil ones he had seen in his travels on the preceding day. The Spirit of Self as the name implies was the personification of Pride. He imagined he was the greatest individual on earth. He alone deserved riches, honor, glory and fame. His ambition knew no bounds. He determined to excell all others, with the limited supply of gifts Nature had bestowed on him, and he was prepared to use any means, fair or foul to attain this goal, even to the extent of crushing out all possible competitors. This was the man who was to help mould the character of our good youth, Talent. He was to display to Talent the practical side of life.

He made his appeal to Talent as he makes it to every one, even to you and me.

They left the house and proceeded at once to the home of a lady friend, whom I shall call Attractiveness. She was a very beautiful young lady and was very popular among the dozen or more suitors for her hand, among whom was Self. The father of the girl was called Power and such indeed he was in the business world. Self was anxious to come into the latter's good graces for he knew that the great man could help him materially in business.

After the introductions Self left Talent very much to himself according to the manner of all selfish people. He continued his campaign to win the hand of the fair lady, and incidentally took pains to become better acquainted with the father.

Talent observed everything—the lack of true hospitality in society, its shams, fickleness and hypocritical inner workings. The spirit of selfishness was displayed by everyone but most especially by his cousin. At table Self continued his attentions to the people in power, but his actions though veiled with the mantle of kindness and chivalry would have been known through the eye of Wisdom as the selfish

desires of an ambitious worldling eager for fame and gain. He did not really love Attractiveness but he loved Power and was seeking the latter through the former.

Later on Talent was taken to Self's place of business. There the latter displayed the same ambitious designs as in society. Always fearful that his competitors would sell more goods or succeed more rapidly than himself, he left nothing undone to urge ahead. Frequently his business because its very nature was inferior to those of the others and Self would then display himself in his true colors; he would use underhand methods, deceive innocent customers, crush out smaller and weaker competitors, and, in a dozen ways known only to people of this class, he sought to acquire the business which he could not obtain in an honest way. And why was all this done? To promote the interest of the Ego at any cost.

Talent was not pleased with the sentiments and ambitions of his cousin and he took the first opportunity to tell him so. The latter was not thankful for the criticism, and tried to justify his attitude, for Selfishness and Pride, hate criticism, even when well-merited. They cannot bear to be rebuked.

"I am no different than my fellow-men," he

said, "they take every precaution to provide for themselves, and most of them would sacrifice anything to attain their ends. 'Every body for himself' is my motto. But I was not always as you see me now. I am as you know the eldest child of worldly, selfish parents, who because of their own quest for wealth and honor left me entirely to myself. I had plenty of money and so I soon learned to shift for myself without the beneficial home influence or fatherly advice or motherly love I should have had. I learned to seek my own amusements and arrange my own business matters. I became isolated more or less from the rest of society, except in affairs of business. Thus I was thrust into a heartless city, full of men who cared nothing for each other, whose all-absorbing thought and hope was to further their own interests. I soon learned to grow like them, I felt it was their existence or mine, and I became so much engrossed with ways and means of advancement that every other sentiment was crowded out. I became the man of steel and hardened my heart to all emotion. The cry of the babe in distress was lost upon me. The weak and the homeless and the unfortunate became objects of ridicule. This has been my philosophy of life, so that now, even Love means nothing to me. Beauty, art, knowledge, amuse-

ment have no significance except as a means of acquiring more power so as to surpass another rival."

"I rose," continued Self, "to the position I have by mere nerve, iron will and personality, I guess you call it. I entered business and succeeded in crowding out all competitors. I entered the social life and because I could talk well and play the part, combined of course with the money I had at my command, I was received with open arms. Again I defeated my rivals on every side."

"My ambition now is to marry the fair lady in the mansion on the hill, not because I love her, but because of the wealth and social prominence I will thereby acquire. Then one day I shall stand at the 'top of the ladder' and shall take the greatest delight in looking down with scornful eye upon the many men I have left behind, upon my former class-mates, business partners, friends and even upon some of the failures in my own family. It will cause me exquisite satisfaction to know that I have surpassed every rival in the business world and in society. I could never bear to be beneath anyone, even one who had acquired his power honestly."

"But, my cousin," said Talent after a pause

during which he reflected on the detestable philosophy of his ambitious relative, "do you not know that all men are brethren in Christ, and that they should love one another, as he loves all men? Have you never heard of the virtues of humility, meekness, self-sacrifice and fraternal charity?"

"I know only what my parents have taught me. They dismissed Conscience from our household long ago. All men brethren? NEVER! Every man is his own provider; charity begins at home; every man is a power in himself and for himself. The survival of the fittest is the law which governs everything in life. If I do not crush my next door neighbor he will crush me, so you see it is the law of Self which should control all our actions."

"But it is wrong, all wrong," answered Talent who was fast losing confidence in human nature as he found it in that city. Your reasoning is false, two wrongs never made a right. 'Do unto others as you would like to have them do unto you' still prevails whether some violate it or not."

"Well perhaps it is not exactly right," responded Self, "but they all do it, so why not I? It is the spirit of the times."

Talent wondered if he could ever become

such a selfish person. He saw the cause and the effect of the Spirit of Ego. He understood what an effect this tendency would and did have on the art and literature of the day. He was disgusted with all he had seen and in fact with every new phase of life in the city, which was shown to him. He began to think that perhaps he would never be satisfied with the city of Temptation. He was in the "heart of the city, that had no heart," and he longed for the sociability, the frankness and loyalty of the simple people who made their home in the village of Tranquility. There the simple folk were contented with the things God had given them. They were not ambitious to crush each other out of existence in order to advance themselves.

Talent knew positively that he could not embrace the doctrines he had thus far seen, nor would his parents ever consent to the prospect of taking up a habitation in this whirlpool of life and pleasure, and becoming one of the worldlings who made up its population.

His motto, "To thine own self be true" pointed in the opposite direction, away from the Spirit of the Age, away from Selfishness, and Ambition and Jealousy. It pointed to Truth never varying, always unchangeable, to Beauty, never

fading, always inspiring, and to Goodness, never dissembling, always recognizable.

"I HAVE SEEN THE WICKED HIGHLY EXALTED AND LIFTED UP LIKE THE CEDARS OF LIBANUS."
(Psalms)
"HE THAT SHALL HUMBLE HIMSELF SHALL BE EXALTED."
(Matt. 23:12)

THE SPIRIT OF FRIVOLITY

THE SPIRIT OF FRIVOLITY

"O Vanity of Vanities, and all is Vanity."
—Scripture.

It is vanity to mind only this present life, and not to look forward into those things which are to come.
—Thomas a' Kempis.

The morning after the interview with Self, Talent came to breakfast looking very wretched. He had passed a sleepless night trying to solve the question of his life work, and his place in the world. But the morning had come and still the question was unsolved. He was determined not to sacrifice his literary gifts to the spirit of the Age nor to adopt the detestable doctrine of Self, yet what was he to do? If he wished to make creative art a profession in the city he would be compelled to "do as the rest did," so his uncle had informed him.

"Talent, you look worried," exclaimed his aunt, Laxity, at the breakfast table. "You appear troubled about something. Do not distress yourself in this way. Why worry about such trifles?" She had heard of Talent's mental struggle from her husband, and to her, of course, such troubles were trifles.

"You must amuse yourself," she added, "you know you live but once and you must make your life worth while. I will send cousin Frivolity down to entertain you—she is such a happy, care-free child, I am sure you will enjoy her company. She can teach you how to cultivate the spirit of optimism which she possesses. She never gets serious or worries about anything. This will prove a pleasant relaxation for you and may give you an inspiration for your future literary work."

And Frivolity came to Talent, as she comes sooner or later into each one's life, even into yours and mine. She was the typical daughter of her idle and worldly mother, Laxity, a careless lass who cared for nothing besides pretty clothes, plenty of idle companions and good times. She was dressed in the height of fashion, her hair arranged in the latest mode, and her face though naturally pretty, artificially "made up" with the most modern greasy trimmings of a French chemist.

She had been away for a number of years attending an exclusive finishing school, where the routine of studies was very often interrupted by parties, dances, balls and the like, which naturally brought spells of indisposition and melancholy the day after. When the effects of

one celebration had worn off, preparations for the next one were begun. As a result of its excellence socially, the school did not amount to much from a practical standpoint. Frivolity knew absolutely nothing about housekeeping, even the very rudiments of this most valuable science were unintelligible, and positively distasteful to her. She was a fine specimen of the buttter-fly or "flapper" type, and such she was likely to remain.

When she came into the room she carried a copy of her father's magazine in which she had marked a story for future perusal. It was called "The Auto Elopment," just the story for one of her type, for as the title intimated, the story pictured the adventures of a young couple, frivolous in the extreme, embarking into a new life, entering a union which should have been for life, with no more thought than if they were going to one of their dancing parties. Other items in the magazine, which interested Frivolity, were poems of passions by the popular poetess of the season, together with some specimen of free verse, a few illustrations drawn by futurist artists and intimate studies of the scandals of "movie-land."

"I think this world is a lovely place, don't you;" Frivolity said to her cousin, "that is, the

city, I mean. I don't think I would like the country. It must be terribly lonesome out where you live. I think I would die there."

Talent hastily informed her that many young ladies like herself managed to live happily in the quiet village of Tranquility without being in extraordinary danger of sudden death.

"I certainly enjoy life," she continued, "why don't you go out more? No wonder you get the blues. You ought to have a good time while you can, and not sit in the house and write literature all day long." Here the little maid opened a box of bon bons which were indicative of her character.

"I feel," said Talent, "that I have a higher mission on earth than merely to enjoy life. Everybody is placed on this earth for a purpose and every one has some duty to perform; if then men and women go on enjoying life all the time, how is the work to be accomplished?

"Always moralizing, aren't you?" answered the girl. "I believe in settling down some time but there is a liberal supply of serious people in this world as it is. I am young and I wish to enjoy things. One can settle down and get serious when one gets old."

Just then the delivery boy came and brought some new dresses for Frivolity, and she used

up the rest of the morning in examining and admiring them. They were called the latest creations from a foreign country. They were not beautiful nor were they modest but they were stylish, which sufficed for Frivolity.

That afternoon she went to the matinee to see one of her father's dramatized novels, called "Millions to Burn." It represented a young woman, who had suddenly become an heiress, in the delightful and interesting occupation of spending money. Frivolity enjoyed the play immensely and spoke of it for weeks. After the matinee she partook of a dainty luncheon at an expensive tea room, after which she departed for home, feeling thoroughly satisfied with herself. This was merely one of many days, and was a fair example of her usual occupations.

The next morning she allowed Talent to escort her to a friend's house, where our hero saw many young ladies which might have borne the name Frivolity. And flippant young men were also present, who neither toiled nor did aught for humanity, but spent their strength and substance seeking light and frothy amusement. They might have borne the name Sloth. The whole function was a conglomeration of fashion, fickleness and feasting to the tune of

dreamy music with a company of idle parasites to enjoy it all.

Occasionally during the course of the celebration, the latest atrocity in music, which the young people termed "Jazz" could be heard, and the guests would respond by dancing with unnatural and ungraceful movements as only such music could inspire.

Talent saw nothing of true art in the music or the dancing and was indeed glad when the time came to go, for he experienced the same feeling that a grown man would feel if given blocks to play with. He was young, it is true, but the idle prattle, the silly giggling, the absurdity and emptiness of Society's methods of entertaining itself were too ridiculous to interest him. He felt that man's time is too valuable for amusement of this kind, even once in a while; but to make this type of entertainment the very essence of one's life and activities is the height of folly.

Thus the life of Frivolity was one round of joy after the other, with never a serious thought, never a rebuke or bit of kindly advice from her parents.

Her mother, Laxity, said, "O, she is young, let her enjoy herself. There is no danger, society has its own code of morals and my

daughter could never do any wrong. She has had such a good training. Her amusements are most innocent."

Besides the mother was so busy with her bridge parties, Suffrage, Eugenics and General Betterment clubs that she had no time for her own daughter's affairs. That very night she was to read a paper on "How to Train Children," yet she could not train her own. She pretended to know how to run the government and yet she could not properly manage her own family. She could lecture for hours on Betterment work, yet she had never lectured to her daughters on any principle calculated to benefit them morally. And there were many mothers like Laxity in Temptation City. For the most part they preferred poodle dogs to babies, but even when they accepted children from the hand of the Creator they were little concerned with the condition of mind and soul such children would be in, when the Creator demanded them back.

The father, Age, said, "They are all having a good time and I want my daughter to keep up with the times; she must not allow the other girls to surpass her in anything. I will give her all that money can buy." Besides he was so busy turning out new novels and plays that he

had no time for his own children. He wrote stories about the evils of society, the lack of proper home influence, and did not see that in his own home conditions were as bad as anywhere in the world.

He claimed to teach a great moral lesson by his books and magazine articles but he had never taken the trouble to teach his sons even one moral lesson by word or example.

"Money is made to spend," said Frivolity to her father as she handed him the bill for a new automobile. "We must not allow the others in our set to excell us."

Talent began to see that the city had many sides that he had not dreamed of before. He clearly saw the futility of his cousin's aimless existence, yet it was true, they all did it, and he wondered what would become of the world if there were no serious people left. He could not, he thought, ever ask such a being to become his wife.

"You never see the serious side of life, I notice," said Talent to his cousin. "If you never do anything worth while, how can you expect to make a success of life."

"Why I am a success," responded the damsel, seeming to be surprised that anyone should even question that fact.

"But have you never thought of Death, that grim visitor who will surely come to you some day and demand that you give up all these things that you love so dearly? Then the only things worth while will be those which you now despise."

"Oh," answered his fickle cousin, "I never think of anything so dreadful. If I think of Death I shall become melancholy and I want to remain joyful and gay at all costs. Also I must make use of my present opportunities before Death comes."

"But do you not believe in the immortality of the soul, in the existence of moral obligation?" asked Talent in amazement.

"I am not sure whether I do or not," was the answer, "that is something for philosophers and scholars to fuss about. We were taught that morality is regulated by public opinion. I am a respected member of society. In the eyes of the world I am good, so why go any deeper into the matter? A person is either good or bad according to his environment, education and station in life. I have all these in a high degree combined with plenty of money to keep me from want all my life, so you see the chances are I shall remain good."

"Of course I go to church once in a while;

don't think I am as bad as some of my friends." And this was true ,she did go to a very fashionable church about once in two months, whenever she wished to display a new gown, or listen to a special musical programme. Her religion served merely as a new type of entertainment to be indulged in when the other amusements grew tiresome.

"There is just one more question," said Talent, "do you ever expect to marry? what kind of wife do you think you will make with such a view of life?"

"I shall never marry any one but a rich man," she answered, "one who can afford all the luxuries to which I have become accustomed. If after living with my husband I find that I cannot agree with him I shall divorce him. Some day I shall meet the man of my dreams and I am sure we shall be very happy. Now this is more serious talking than I have done for some time so please don't introduce the subject again." And the dear child reached for her favorite fiction magazine, opened a box of bon bons, and settled herself comfortably in the easy chair to while away another hour.

Talent was stunned by this latest discovery. Had all the world gone wrong, he wondered. Were his high ideals and hopes to be thus

rudely shattered? What should be done about the future? How was he to proceed to reach the goal he had set for himself? It was, he knew, his aunt's desire that he eventually marry one of the daughters, for she would have been glad to claim the gifted youth as a son-in-law, and the Age wished to make him a co-partner in his business.

Perhaps he was wrong, perhaps his ideals were too lofty for the present age. If every one but himself adopted the teachings of the time why should he set himself up against them? But with this thought came the ever-haunting memory of home and dear parents, and the watchful companion, Conscience, told him that the true and good could never be found in the sphere in which Frivolity travelled. One who cared more for idle amusements than for home life, more for poodle dogs than for little children, would never make a good life partner. Their aspirations were essentially different. Talent was sore distressed and again the Age sought a new way to interest him.

THE SPIRIT OF SENSUALITY

THE SPIRIT OF SENSUALITY

Impurity is spread through the press and literature of the day; it leers at us from the stage; it predominates our paintings and statues; they call it Art and they lie, they worship it as Art. What Idolatry! Men today are sacrificing their honor and health, their peace and hope of Heaven to the idol—Sensuality.—Bishop Stang.

"Our nephew is a prude," exclaimed the Age to his wife a few days later, "he has been in school so long and under the influence of that old priest and his servant Conscience for such a long time, that I fear he will eventually turn reformer. He is altogether too 'moral' for this generation. These 'goody-goody' artists never last long and, as the world is constituted at the present time, he is doomed to certain failure. However I will not give up hope yet. He ought to get into the heart of the city and see life. He ought to see that there is really nothing wrong there. He ought to taste the cup of life and see that it is sweet."

And then came Sensuality, another son of the age and Laxity, and said "Father, let me take the young gentleman to my office and show him my business, after which I will take him to see

life in the big city. I will make him admit that this old city of ours is a very joyful place after all."

So it was arranged. Sensuality came to Talent as he comes to everyone, even to you and me. His ugliness was cleverly concealed and his baseness was made attractive.

Sensuality who acted as President and General Manager of the Impurity Publishing Company, escorted Talent to his richly furnished office. Our hero felt that he was to be unusually tempted today and Conscience who followed, warned him that today he would meet with difficulties and trials which would be hard to overcome. He was to be tempted in a different manner today, in a way most alluring to man ,in which the ugliness of vice was to be concealed behind the cloak of pleasure.

The business, in which the cousin Sensuality was engaged, the Impurity Publishing Co., made a success of marketing books, pamphlets, pictures, songs, etc., supposedly artistic, but in reality immoral and degrading productions of a host of workmen, whose diseased minds thought of nothing but filth. The company's advertisement appeared in every cheap flashy magazine, and was answered by hundreds of people in every walk of life, principally working people,

young men and women, whose first ideas of wickedness were often derived from this source, and who gradually acquired a taste for such trash. Country youths and maidens, who had no means or opportunity to secure good reading in abundance, were often led by these advertisements to purchase from the Impurity Publishing firm, the "gems of literature" which that company offered for such a nominal price.

When Talent arrived in the office of Sensuality, he looked about him, and on the walls he beheld pictures of every description, large and small, cheap and expensive, with frames and without; but all alike in one respect, that they were all immoral productions of the company's "artists." Some were merely suggestive and needed a title beneath to reveal their true significance. Others made no pretense of decency and openly displayed their filth. All of them claimed to be masterpieces of ultra-modern Art.

Talent was now taken through the plant, which was very large, and which required many hundred men to operate. In one department the workmen were engaged in turning out thousands of copies of the latest book on Sexology, which as Sensuality explained, would be sold at such a low price that every young man and woman, no matter how poor, could afford to buy a copy.

Others were busy on editions explaining the White Slave Traffic, Birth Control, Eugenics and scores of other subjects equally "beneficial to society." Everything which catered to the base passions of man was put into print, made into books and scattered in all directions supposedly to educate men but primarily to satisfy those who loved immoral filth, and ultimately to bring in money.

Talent shuddered as he thought of the harm that was being done every day, by the dissemination of such salicious reading matter, especially among the innocent youths and maidens of the country, for these young people were the principal readers of this filth.

In still another section of this large publishing house were men engaged in the production of fancy postcards, photograph prints and the like, all "bewitching poses" so the advertisements said, but they were nothing else than low, debasing, impure pictures, which were to be sent out into the wide world to carry on their diabolical work of perversion.

"My God!" exclaimed Talent, "has it come to this? Must I also turn my hand to these productions, and call them Art? Surely, if the world has come to this there is no hope for the triumph of real Art."

Then Talent began to wonder whether after all, he was not too old fashioned, whether his lofty ideas of morality were not too strict for this age. Perhaps, he thought, he must conform at least in some degree to the present standard. But Conscience assured him that morality is ever the same and that truth never varies, that the demoralization of Art could never bring anything but evil, and Talent felt strengthened once more. He felt that sooner than give up his ideals and create such ignoble products, he would be content never to write another line; rather than produce such abominable literature he would suffer himself to remain unhonored in the hall of fame.

Sensuality now led the way into a popular vaudeville house where a permormance was about to take place. It was advertised as one of the best shows that the local house had presented in some time, and Sensuality was overjoyed at the very thought of it, for he was sure it would be something according to his own heart. While waiting for the curtain to rise Talent was introduced to several friends of his cousin who were seated near by. Then followed a series of suggestive and vulgar stories and jokes which these young men told for each other's amusement, much to the disgust of our hero. The laughter

of the crowd became more uproarious as each joke became more filthy. Finally the show began and much to the relief of Talent the jokesters kept quiet and directed their attention to the stage where they expected to find more material for their already vast collection of smut.

"These shows formerly were too sublime for us men of the world," informed Sensuality, "but during the last few years, especially since Dad has had much to do with the booking of shows, they have been getting better and more lively all the time. They have plenty of punch and kick —take the audience right off their feet. That is the kind I enjoy." And Sensuality settled back in his seat and turned his attention to the stage where he expected to see a spectacle which would be just to his liking.

Meanwhile our hero could imagine what kind of a show was coming, for his previous knowledge of his cousin's character gave him an idea of the kind of entertainment such a person would naturally enjoy.

The performance had begun. It was a typical vaudeville program consisting of a number of acts, each lasting about fifteen minutes so that the "hurry-up" pleasure seeker would not be bored with anything extremely long.

One act consisted of a series of Oriental dances

interpreted by a popular permormer whose daring license had paved the way for her success. She had on only sufficient clothing to come barely within the lines of the law against nakedness. Taken all in all it was an open exploitation of womanhood to the degradation of youth of both sexes. The audience was surprisingly evenly divided between men and women and these folks were for the most part under middle age, many of them very young.

This particular dancing act had been prohibited by the police in some of the other cities in the country, but in Temptation City there were no censors. Hence they believed in "liberty" and according to the false logic of the Age, this meant to publish or enact anything before the public, no matter how debasing.

The Age did not believe in censorship. He had often said, "a stage that promises to keep clean and refined in a sense attributed to those words by a respectable majority of any moment in history, is a stage that must avoid the new, close its doors to genius, deny the creative spirit and league itself on principle with rigidity and spiritual sloth." Therefore nothing in the way of censorship was permitted in this city.

Next came a singing and talking act, replete with the latest suggestive jokes, salacious re-

partee, and smutty parodies on popular ragtime, songs. All of these things were thoroughly enjoyed by the gay young people who comprised the audience. The applause was invariably measured by the degree of smut in the song or story.

The so-called head-liner of this pleasing performance was a tabloid version of a filthy drama, senseless as to the theme or purpose, but nevertheless effective because of its appeal to the sensual.

After this came an exhibition of posing and fancy diving and swimming by a group of scantily clad females, much to the enjoyment of the audience. Following this aquatic demonstration, there came a young man and girl who proceeded to execute some of the "late dance steps" in typical jazz fashion with many of the added twists and contortions, popular in the very lowest dance halls. The entertainment reached the height of perfection in this act, for the audience were delighted and whistled and shouted for more.

Talent, to whom the whole thing was disgusting, made a move to depart, and as the next number happened to be a musical act, something which Sensuality could by no means appreciate, they promptly made their way to the street.

Sensuality had feasted his eyes on the impure so long, that real music no longer held any charms for him. He was, however, more than pleased with the program as a whole, and was very much surprised to find that Talent did not agree with him.

Sensuality next took our hero to dinner, a source of pleasure which the children of the flesh can never forget for very long. He said:

"I always like to eat and drink; it is one of man's greatest pleasures." Talent had never regarded eating as such before. To him when done with moderation, it had always been a duty, merely to preserve life, not as his cousin said, "one of man's greatest pleasures."

The cousin led our hero into a delightful restaurant, richly furnished, artistically lighted, replete with music and cabaret, and peopled with a gay, noisy crowd of sensual creatures, whose one purpose in life seemed to be the gratification of their lower desires.

Sensuality ate ravenously of the sumptuous dinner he had ordered and drank copiously of the sparkling wine which went with it. He offered liquor to Talent several times, and laughed sneeringly at the lad's refusal.

"Do you expect to go through life like a Puritan?" he asked, "don't you see that your mor-

ality is contrary to the order of things in this world? Why don't you enjoy yourself like I do? You cannot gain anything by steadfastly refusing to do as the rest of us do. People will be offended if you preach your unwelcome doctrines to them. They believe they are doing what is right in following their desires for pleasure and sensual joys, or if they do not actually believe they are doing right, they are at least little concerned with such doctrines as you are promulgating. After all, it is left to each one of us to see to it that he gets as much joy out of life as possible, so why worry?"

Talent tried to tell his cousin that his reasoning was false, that the free will of man decided whether man would be happy or unhappy, both in this world and the next. He tried to explain that the morality, which the world understood, was no morality at all without religion. But it seemed to Talent that he could not at that moment think of the arguments which were necessary to prove his point. Again the doubt arose as to whether he was fighting a useless fight or not. It seemed such a hopeless thing to try and prove to the Age and his minions that they were wrong, and that Conscience, Truth and Religion were correct. Conscience seemed very far away at this moment and Talent did not know how to

proceed. He groped in the dark for the answer which somehow would not come. The beautiful world in which Sensuality and all his kind lived, seemed rather free from care and worry. It seemed to be a pleasing and delightful place even if the joy did last but for a short time.

At that moment Conscience appeared with an old friend, whom I have called Counsel. The latter opened a huge book which he always carried, and pictured to Talent the results of Impurity and Immorality in the world, portraying the terrible penalty, which Sensuality and his colleagues would have to pay for their riotous living and immodesty. Some of them became the victims of loathsome diseases, others ended their days in insane asylums, still others went to early graves, self-murderers. Some were even cut down by the avenging hand of a just God in the midst of their sins, and with foul and filthy souls went to meet their Maker. But the most terrible picture of all was the one representing these souls in the future state of eternal retribution, suffering in the flames, cursing their folly and uttering imprecations upon their companions in crime.

"Enough," said Talent, "I plainly see the folly of this life of sin, and I shall fortify myself against any recurrence of this temptation."

And in the wild excitement of that noisy palace of depravity, Talent heard the parting words of his mother:

"I pray that God will keep thee as thou are,
So innocent and pure of heart."

And in the midst of the mad whirl of the cabaret, he saw a bright light, and in it a silver chest with the illuminated word, "Memory," and in this bright vision, were the forms of his dear parents, beckoning their encouragement.

Louder than the seductive strains of the orchestra and the shouts of the revellers, came the words,

"To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night, the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

* * *

After the meal, though Sensuality was by no means anxious to discontinue his merry-making, Talent finally persuaded him to leave, and together they made their way to the home of the Age. Sensuality would have liked to show Talent the low, vile dance hall, which the former visited on many occasions, and where other youths and maidens of tender age were learning

the wicked ways of the world. Talent demurred, however. He had seen enough.

He was becoming disgusted with the shams, frivolities and wicked ways of this great city, and he longed for the peace and quiet of his little home town, Tranquility. Conscience would have that they depart at once for their old home, but a strangely sweet voice kept whispering to Talent,

"No, do not go, you will see wonderful things, if you remain. You will enjoy these pleasures in time. Your search for Art will be rewarded. Remain a little while longer."

That night Talent could not sleep. He kept pondering on the things he had seen. He felt that in spite of what he had witnessed that day, there must still be some good people in Temptation City. He was sure that there were in this city, some men and women, who like himself loved and sought the True, and the Beautiful, and the Good. He must find them. Finding them meant that he would find the inspiration to produce works of Art, which would be worthy of a man with an immortal soul, worthy of a being made according to the likeness of the Creator.

But, could this inspiration ever be found in Temptation City? Could the jazzy music, the

salacious stories and songs, the filthy sex problem novel, the suggestive play on which the race of men in Temptation City fed, cultivate a desire in the heart of any one to reach the summit of perfection in Art? He would soon see.

We have, perhaps like Talent, searched in vain in Temptation City for Art, when we should have sought this wonderful gift under the blue sky, with the aid of the trees, the birds, the flowers and the brook. Talent was soon to realize this truth—God grant that we may realize it as well.

* * *

"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. V, 8.)

* * *

"Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost? Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy. (I Cor. VI, 16, 17.)

THE SPIRIT OF GREED

THE SPIRIT OF GREED

We use our art to gain our own vain ends instead of being driven by our Art to find adequate expression for some great truth that demands through us a hearing. This sums up the whole position in the present-day creative art.—H. B. Wright.

Morning came and with it the announcement that Talent was utterly disgusted with the city and that he was contemplating an abrupt departure. His uncle was in a rage. He had hoped to employ Talent in his business and make him a shining light in the field of modern literature and drama. The lad's scruples, he felt, would be forgotten in the sea of worldly amusements into which he had been plunged. But now the Age saw this child of promise slipping from his grasp. However, he was determined not to give up yet. His friend and adviser, Greed would know how to influence Talent.

Greed had always been a great friend of the Age. He had no real business but assisted and inspired everyone of the artists in the uncle's employ. In fact he was a very prominent man about the town, and a real force in the community, as we shall see. His one and only desire

was the accumulation of money. He would sacrifice anything, and perform any task, however low and debasing it might be, for the sake of the almighty dollar. He claimed money ruled the world and proceeded to prove it to Talent, to whom he had just been introduced.

Did greed ever make his eloquent appeal to you and me? Verily, just as he sought to influence Talent, so he has tried his arguments on us. His appeal is ever old and ever new. And as long as the world exists Greed will continue to hold out alluring rewards to us as he did to Talent, and men will continue to sell their gifts, their talents, their virtues, ay, their very souls for gold.

"People will sacrifice anything for money," said Greed, "Art, fame, social position, even safety and health are forfeited at times to acquire more money. Money buys everything and accomplishes everything. Your uncle writes novels, not for the sake of Art but for money. Your cousins sell pictures and produce plays, not because they love to entertain the people, but because they love money. Their talented sisters, your dear cousins, enjoy life because they have plenty of money and can spend it at will. In short money is the greatest good in the world. Its accumulation is man's final goal.

"Now consider this, if you devote your powers to the present day fiction, art and music, you will soon become famous. Once you have acquired fame you will be able to sell your ideas for enormous amounts, and thus become wealthy. But on the other hand, if you continue to foster that hopeless idealism for which you are notorious, you will become more ridiculous every day, for people will set themselves against you. You will be an obscure struggling artist all your life, a dismal failure. Understand that you can never become famous, unless you work for your uncle, the Spirit of the Age.

"I once knew a young man like yourself," continued Greed. "He had great gifts, a fine education and an opportunity to enter business. He began well, married a charming young lady and started on a career.—One day he was confronted by a big business deal, the outcome of which meant fortune or failure. He hesitated because he feared he might violate the high principles of morality, which he had set for himself. He failed, lost his opportunity to become great, and remained poor. He not only plunged himself into misery but made life unbearable for his wife and babies. He finally became desperate, joined a band of thieves, was caught in an act of thievery and sent to jail. His poor wife died by her

own hand, and his children became tramps. And why did all this happen? Because he neglected a golden opportunity to make himself and his family rich. He became a martyr to principle. He was a fool.

"Money gives you power, makes you respected in the community, ushers you into the best homes, throws open to you the portals of commercial life—and you despise it. Money gives you all the joys and pleasures of the world, and insures you against hardship, poverty, misery and grief—and you scorn it."

To say that Talent was not tempted by this eloquent appeal would be to give a young man credit for experience and discretion beyond his years. He was tempted. Even you and I have been tempted to yield to a similar appeal. Even the aged man with hair of silver, about to meet his God, had been so tempted.

Talent had seen enough of the city to know that Greed's doctrine prevailed everywhere. Must he then also succumb to this subtle power and sacrifice his lofty ideals on the altar of GOLD? Conscience answered, "NO"—Talent hesitated. He anticipated the joy which the possession of riches would bring. He realized that all his hopes and desires could then be satisfied. He

understood, at least vaguely, what great power he would wield if he were wealthy.

In that moment of doubt Talent saw a vision appear. He saw some of the misery caused in this world by man's untiring and ceaseless efforts to acquire money. He saw before him a huge crowd of people of all types, ages, sizes, rich and poor, strong and weak. All were hurrying forward, and all had their eyes rivited on the one goal. The rich and the strong were afraid of losing their position and were striving to push their poor and weak brethren out of their way, while the poor and the weak were cursing their more fortunate brethren for the advantage they had. A son spurned his father; a friend trampled upon his friend; the spirit of hatred and envy was stamped on every face.

And Talent looked up to see the object for which this huge crowd was striving, the thing which had taken all brotherly love and affection from their hearts, the thing which had robbed them of all consideration for each other. It was a phantom flying ahead of the throng, a phantom which bore the name G O L D. This was the thing for which every man in that vast crowd would sacrifice his ideals, his art, his nobility of character, his very soul.

And behind the vast throng that sought the

phantom, Gold, and entirely unnoticed by all, stood the grim Reaper, Death. He selected certain ones here and there among the crowd, and cut them down, ending forever the quest for the phantom. Eventually the horrible Destroyer was to slay all the multitude but not one was conscious of the fact. Every one was bent on acquiring gold. Talent heard the words; "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee, and whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Conscience said, "Greed for gold is one of the greatest enemies of true Art in the world today. Until men realize the futility of their all-absorbing quest for riches, until they begin to appreciate their sacred gifts and privileges, and take Art at its true value, until then, the products of the age must remain what they are now, false, empty, useless products of an age of commercialism. Whatever a fickle and depraved public, devoid of religious sense and moral code, demand, that is produced because it brings to its creators the almighty dollar."

Talent saw things in their true significance now, and he took a firmer stand against the false reasoning of Greed and his uncle. He made up his mind that he would be poor all his life rather than become wealthy in the way described by

Greed.—Surely after all there would be a way out of his difficulty.

"No, uncle," he said, "I must still refuse. You must offer me better inducements than these if you wish to win me to your cause."

Greed utterly dumfounded at the youth's obstinacy angrily rushed from the room and down the street in search of a new "shady" enterprise which would net him several thousands more.

The uncle now introduced two more assistants of his whom he had helped to positions of trust in the field of arts and letters. First came Fame who had sacrificed his ideals, fostered in a good school, to the low standards of the Age.

"I once thought as you," he said, "I felt that I could never devote my time and talent to the shallow and debasing products of the times, but I soon perceived that if I wished to make a name for myself I must cater to the whims of influential people, and give them the kind of art and literature they desired. I could not bear the thought of remaining an obscure author predestined to failure from the outset. I could not bear to have my lofty hopes and ambitions shattered, so I began to give the public the work it craved, I conformed to popular taste and at once I became famous, and was honored by all. I am now at the head of my profession and shall re-

main in that coveted position as long as I favor the Age and his patrons. This fame I can offer you also, Talent, if you conform to public taste. If you do not, obscurity and failure must be your portion."

Again Talent, fortified by his home training and Christian education, and prompted by the whispered warnings of Conscience answered:

"No, I again refuse. To sacrifice my ideals for such rewards would be like casting pearls to swine. I would rather remain in obscurity than rise to prominence at the sacrifice of Art and my nobler sentiments."

As he spoke, Social Distinction, the third assistant of the Age came forward and said:

"When you see my enviable position among the upper classes, surrounded on all sides by flattering men and adoring women, then you will see the advantage of catering to those who are in power. I enjoy social prominence; I am the idol of the hour; I receive invitations to all the society functions; I enter the most exclusive sets and am honored as a great artist, and a genius by a silly public incapable of appreciating true art. But they are satisfied so I need not worry. If I ruin my art to satisfy them, they have to carry the blame, not I. If I were to change the character of my productions and give them real Art,

they would not know or appreciate it and consequently they would hate me and cast me out. I crave society's honors and praises and I will sacrifice anything to obtain them. You must also become like me, if you wish to be successful in your chosen field. You cannot disregard the demands of the public and hope thereby to be honored and rewarded by that public. There is but one way to succeed, and that is to offer your services to the Spirit of the Times."

Talent once more refused to be led from the path of duty, and firmly denounced this last tempter, as well as those that had preceded him.

"I refuse to submit my gifts to your false art," he said, "I shall never sacrifice my literary ability to the Signs of the Times. May God help me keep this resolution! As for the reward you offer, I ignore that. I will, with God's help produce works of Art, but if these are not accepted by the fickle public, I care not, for I know they will be products, worthy of me and of the noble race of intellectual men, of which I am a member. My greatest reward will be the satisfaction I feel in knowing that I have used my gifts as God meant I should. I ask for nothing more. I will ever be faithful to the advice of my parents, and the warnings of my friend, Conscience.

This day our hero had passed through a severe

ordeal. Placed in a world of pleasure, surrounded by the joys of materialism, we can imagine he was sorely tempted. The spiritual and the ideal seemed during their eloquent appeals to be very unsatisfying and inadequate. Yet, here again, his excellent training was manifest, and the words of the poet came back to him, "To thine own self be true—."

That night when Talent retired to rest, he gazed long and tenderly at the silver chest his folks had given him, a practice which he had not forgotten since he arrived in Temptation City. And on this night he felt that he could look honestly and fearlessly at the pictures of his dear parents, and say, "I have done my duty, I have followed in the footsteps of the just."

Gold alone does passion move!
Gold monopolizes love!
A curse on her and on the man
Who this traffic first began!

Gold begets in brethren hate;
Gold, in families, debate;
Gold does friendship separate,
Gold does civil wars create.

These, the smallest harms of it;
Gold, also, does love beget.
—Crowley

Fame is what you have taken,
Character's what you give;
When to this truth you awaken
Then you begin to live.
—Bayard Taylor.

THE SPIRIT OF HYPOCRISY

THE SPIRIT OF HYPOCRISY

But whatever you are, be true!
Be visible through and through!
Leave to others the shamming,
The cheating and palming,
In fun and in earnest, be true!
—Anon.

Woe to you, hypocrites, because you are like to whitened sepulchures, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and all filthiness.
—Scripture.

Soon after the events narrated in the preceding chapter, the Age called his son Hypocrisy, the most friendly and affable person imaginable, who outwardly was a very conscientious and God-fearing man. He was very clever however, and though at heart just as corrupt as his brothers and the rest of their associates, or even worse at times, he nevertheless was capable of hiding his true character under a veil of righteousness.

Hypocrisy believed that a man was rewarded or punished for the good or evil he did openly, acts which every man could see, acts on which society could pass judgment. In his estimation

a man was as good as he appeared. The sins done in secret, the filthy thoughts surging through diseased brains, the thoughts of envy, hatred and revenge formulating in the mind of the criminal, all these were not evil in themselves, providing they never came to view. Character and reputation were one and the same thing to this exponent of the Times, and a man was good if the people considered him good. This accounted for his business and his art productions which were soon to be shown to our hero.

The amiable cousin Hypocrisy, seemingly very frank and sincere, smiled indulgently upon Talent, even as he has smiled upon millions of others, even as he has smiled upon you and me. and led him forth to his sphere of activity. He was an exponent of the New Art Motion Pictures, which owing to their many advantages could have become a real influence for good in any community. If properly controlled by conscientious men and women, they could have been employed in all educational ventures, business activities and finally as mediums of grand thoughts and noble aspirations in the drama. Instead of this however the new art had been taken over by an age of Commercialism and Materialism and the result—serious

wholesome plays in film died of neglect, and in their place came what the people wanted, the corrupt and degrading piece of mechanism called the modern 'Movie.'

Hypocrisy was a producer of such photoplays, which he called clean and wholesome amusement for young and old, which were invariably passed by the boards of censors, and which were advertised as a great moral uplift in the community. However in all the vast amount of film made at the suggestion and under the supervision of Hypocrisy, there were but a few plays that could even be called attempts at Art. Some of the rest were senseless dramas depicting robberies, murders, and a dozen other crimes; scenes designed to be humorous and supposed to produce uproarious laughter, in which the characters were placed in circumstances uncalled for and unreasonable from which they extricated themselves with difficulty, much to the amusement of the children and many simple-minded adults.

Some of the plays were suggestive, others artistically immoral, and still others presented phases of free love, birth control, divorce, white slavery and the like, the portrayal of which was an insult to any generation of intelligent men and women, and whose baneful effects must

naturally be very great. The diabolical ingenuity by which the originator of these artistic counterfeits deceived the public with his filthy products, made the most marked impression on Talent. If the play portrayed all the crimes and wickedness of the underworld then it was advertised as a moral lesson, a warning to young girls; if it presented shameless near-nudities of depraved actors, then it was called a work of art. Thus the real harm was invariably hidden beneath the mantle of beauty and goodness. On the pretext of producing art or teaching a great moral lesson these lascivious scenes were shown and the harm they brought to all people but especially to innocent youths and maidens, whose first wrong impressions of life and first ideas of wickedness were derived from this source, could easily be imagined.

"These artistic masterpieces, these wonders of the science of photography are intended primarily," said Hypocrisy, "to teach man the lesson of good and evil, that good ought to be done and evil avoided. They are guaranteed to put young folks on their guard especially, and they prove a warning to people to shun the great social evils of this generation. They will in time do away with crime. Surely you will be willing to devote your gifts to this noble cause, the

stamping out of crime, and ignorance. It is only through this new medium of enlightenment and training that this can be done efficaciously.

"In my plays I make virtue appear beautiful, and vice horrible so that people will see the difference between the two and so be led to do the right and avoid crime." (The fact that people in Temptation City were constantly becoming worse did not seem to appeal to the would-be moralist).

"Of course, since you are to become one of us here, I might add that we do not really believe that we are preaching a great lesson or giving the public true art, but the people think so, at least for the most part, and we allow them to think as they please, so long as they pay for the production we turn out."

Talent, however, could have seen the shallowness of Hypocrisy and his system even without this admission. Talent knew by now that this was merely an excuse for marketing the obscene plays, but the audacity of the fellow stunned him for all that.

"My cousin," said Talent, "there are vices which should not be openly paraded, especially before the eyes of impressionable youths and maidens. No good can come from such a display—nothing but harm. Innocent young folks

who know nothing about some crimes, learn all about them from your vivid portrayals, and as a result, sins are multiplied instead of diminished. Another thing,—even when you show at the end of your picture play that wickedness is punished and goodness and purity rewarded, you fill nine-tenths of the play with the lurid and ugly details of a wicked life, so that very little good and much harm are bound to result. So much for your pretended morality. As for your frank admission concerning the real state of your mind and soul, I can only say that your work is demoniacal both in wickedness and effectiveness."

Hypocrisy naturally resented this well-merited denunciation. That was the role he could play best,—injured innocence. Talent was so exasperated over this new, hitherto unequalled example of the baseness of this age that he exclaimed vehemently:

"The world thinks your plays are artistic, yet I tell you there never was a more base travesty on the name. The world thinks you are teaching a moral lesson, but I tell you in the voice of Truth that your shameless output has just the opposite effect, it does more harm under the guise of innocence and purity than the products of the other schools which make no pretense of morality.

"You are against censorship, and you say it is a violation of liberty—You lie when you say that, for liberty is the freedom to do what is right, not the license to give the people spiritual and moral poison. No one has a right to do what is wrong. This is what competent and conscientious censors are trying to prevent, and you say that they take away your liberty. It is the height of folly to put such an interpretation on the word—liberty."

Before leaving the studio of Hypocrisy, Talent had an opportunity to view in the concrete some of the cousin's latest productions. One was a spectacle called the "Breath of Nature" showing an utter disregard for all the rules of modesty and propriety—this was a very elaborate play costing thousands of dollars to produce. It was advertised as the triumph of the cinema, the most elaborate spectacle of the century. Another displayed the dangers which beset young folks in the large cities, and many an innocent youth and maiden, much to their detriment, were to receive their first impressions of vice through this medium. The rest of the plays inspected were much the same, all supposedly ethical or educational productions almost always filled with lascicious scenes, which under the pretense of conveying a moral lesson were really meant to

appeal to the baser nature of man. All of them were cleverly wrapped in the robe of righteousness, but they preached the violation of the divine commandments just as surely as if they had paraded their impurity openly.

Talent had seen enough. The false teachings and veiled wickedness of his cousin Hypocrisy had made more of an impresion on him than the open violations of God's commandments by the other brethren, for Talent realized that in this case the harm was greater, and less likely to be discoverēd. He was beginning to doubt whether he would ever be able to find a true and worthy medium for his art, whether he would not be compelled to give up his profession altogether. He began to despair of ever finding true beauty and goodness expressed in art, or people who could appreciate it after it was given to them.

In the very darkness of despair came the encouraging voice of Conscience telling him that some day the creatures of this age would wake up and discover their folly, some day Talent would be able by means of his Art to teach them the beauty of the human soul and its higher aspirations, and that he would eventually meet the being who would make this achievement possible, the Spirit of Beauty, that together they would go forth under the guidance and direction

of Religion and preach to the world the message of Nature, in terms of truth and beauty.

This consolation made Talent feel better and he retired to bed that night thinking and planning for the great future which was open to him after he left this wicked city. The motto which he had chosen for himself made a new appeal to him now, since he had made a study of the abominable double-morality of his cousin, Hypocrisy. In letters of light, bright as the snow in sun light he saw the words of the motto:

To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

THE SPIRIT OF INTEMPERANCE

THE SPIRIT OF INTEMPERANCE

Oh, that men should put an enemy in
Their mouths to steal away their brains! that we
Should, with joy, pleasure, revel and applause,
Transform ourselves to beasts.

—*Shakespeare.*

"Surely," said the Age to another of his sons, Intemperance, "Talent will love your company, for you are like him in many respects. you are a college-bred man like himself, (the uncle did not mention what kind of a college) you have great gifts of intellect, a handsome face and manly form so I think you two will make a splendid pair. Take him out with you and try to interest him in something by all means. Your dear brother Sensuality, with whom you have always been so intimate was unable to please our conscientious relative, but perhaps you will succeed where he failed." The Age was determined not to lose Talent without a last strenuous effort.

So this son of the Age, whom I have called Intemperance, became the companion of our hero, and the latter was given the opportunity to study his life and actions. And no doubt we

can all recall how at one time or other in our lives the Spirit of Intemperance, beautiful and attractive, comely as to face and form appealed in a most enticing manner to all of us.

Intemperance it is true had once been a most promising young man, endowed by Nature with rare gifts of body, and soul. He had been sent to a big university far from home because the father had heard much about this institution and thought it was the most stylish and exclusive of all. The Age considered the prestige attached to this well known institution, an all-important feature. Here the youth had received excellent training for mind and body, but his heart and soul had been left to their own desires, and owing to evil influences, bad companions and too much freedom and idleness his mind became "the veritable Devil's work shop," and the heart and soul were soon corrupted.

All kinds of abuses crept into the life of this student whose education was so one-sided, and whose preceptors concerned themselves but little with what went on outside of the class room.

It was an evil day when this child of the Age was first induced to taste liquor, at the invitation of a fellow student. The occasion was a celebration of some kind in a fellow student's room. At first he had not wanted any of the fiery fluid,

which turns men's brains into water, but his friends coaxed him and rather than be called a coward he accepted the glass, and began a habit which had now grown to such a degree that it made him more beast than man. Before that he had not known many of the evils in the world, but now his eyes were opened and the most flagrant violations of rules and precepts were as nothing to him.

His great intellectual gifts were soon wrecked. He cared for nothing but the gay riotous living with which his friends soon made him familiar. One extravagant feast and drunken carousal followed the other, until finally he was expelled from the university. The institution which had fostered the spirit of God-less education and mind-training without morality, now cast aside the protege who had followed its dictum to the letter.

In the city the unfortunate youth allowed his passion for strong drink to be satisfied to the full extent. His liberal supply of money provided by his careless and indulgent parents enabled him to take part in every function which the shallow and flippant society folk could arrange and always was the imbibing of strong drink one of the necessary features. His craving for liquor became stronger every day because it

was continually indulged. This was the condition of affairs at the time this chapter opens, and this dissolute youth I have pictured was the one appointed by the Age to interest Talent in the joys of the city.

Intemperance sought to justify himself by saying that artists and geniuses in general had to have some weakness of this kind. The world expected them to be temperamental. After all, "one had to sow his wild oats," he told Talent.

Instead of convincing our hero of the advisability of adopting such a course, Intemperance, by his presence and by what he pictured to Talent, made him see, as he had never seen before, the terrible effects of the drink habit. And the examples he saw were the same as those that have appeared to men the world over, the same terrible examples that have made an impression perhaps upon you and me.

First he saw an elaborately furnished beer garden, peopled mostly with young men and women. These youths and maidens of tender age, many of whom were in the place for the first time, were imbibing ample quantities of beer and wine to the tune of dreamy music and the gay laughter of companions. Blinded by the richness and magnificance of their surroundings, forgetful of anxious mothers at home, many of

them were tasting for the first time in their young lives, the wine cup, which seemed to them then the cup of happiness but which was to become a cup of bitter sorrow.

Dancing of course went hand-in-hand with this drinking carnival—not the oldfashioned dancing which was graceful and becoming, but the latest "jazzy" and suggestive innovations of ultra-modern dancing teachers. The young women who would cry for help at the least suggestion of familiarity on the part of men in any other place, here allowed liberties, which would have been disgraceful in the jungle. Immodest costumes, painted and powdered faces were everywhere in evidence, and helped to complete this midnight orgy.

Next Talent saw the poor working man, who had to toil from early morning till late at night to keep his family from starvation, whose meager earnings were absolutely necessary to purchase food and clothing for his wife and little ones—he saw this man leave his work at the end of the week and enter a saloon in which he squandered his hard-earned salary on liquor which would soon transform him into a beast. This same man would then go to his home in a drunken fury and abuse his patient wife and crying children. He further saw this family,

reduced to utter destitution, further reviled and abused by the father whose heart had been changed to stone in the glittering palace of Intemperance, turned into the street.

Another scene pictured a shabby looking tramp begging for a drink in a dirty little saloon. When he had plenty of money he had squandered it on liquor and now he had not a cent to his name. But the demon within him demanded liquor and so he begged a drink for nothing. The proprietor was displaying a costly diamond which he had purchased for his wife, and the tramp, becoming interested, asked to see the valuable gem. The proprietor ordered him away and threatened to throw him into the street if he did not move on. The unfortunate sot seemed to regain some of his self-possession and said:

"I bought that diamond there with all the money I have given you for the vile stuff which reduced me to my present state. I became a drunken bum and you, a rich man. Now you wish to throw me out. And driven to despair the poor tramp rushed at the proprietor and would have killed him. The latter, however, was the stronger and without further ado he cast the wretch into the gutter, where he was left to die.

Still another scene met the horrified gaze of our hero. This time it was a woman who was the

victim. She who is the ideal of man's dreams, to whom man looks of love, devotion, inspiration and all that is noble and elevating, she had become a victim of the drink habit. She had left home to avoid the strict but kindly discipline of fond parents, had descended the social ladder, step by step, and finally sold herself for gold—gold with which to buy liquor. On this night she had been unsuccessful in her quest for a victim, and her passion for drink must needs be satisfied. Her money was gone, she dared not go home, and there was no one in all the heartless city whom she could have called friend. At length in despair she hurried to the river bank determined to end it all. She took one last glance at the city of crime behind her and plunged into the river ending her life of impurity and intemperance. The dark waters closed over her and she went to meet her God. Merciful Heaven what a life! What a death!

Thus did Talent see every imaginable vice follow in the wake of the drunkard. Into such a world plunged his cousin. To him the idea of virtue meant nothing; all finer sentiments, and aspirations were but idle fancies. Nothing could please him but the wine cup and this became his god. Talent shuddered as he thought of the inevitable goal toward which his cousin was tend-

ing. He understood the words of the wise man when he said:

"There is no vice except drunkenness which can so utterly destroy the peace and happiness of the home, which can so completely transform the image of God into an image of Satan."

Talent also saw how powerless he was to remedy the evil. He distinctly understood that if Art were ever to triumph in Temptation City, the spirit of Intemperance and his companions must be effectually eradicated. In this cesspool of drunken debauchery there was no room for beauty or goodness. He saw too that the many laws which man was making to do away entirely with liquor, would not suffice to keep men temperate. The old law of God was not enough to make men just and holy—how could man's law accomplish anything? Until the people of Temptation City would respond to the message of righteousness and make temperance one of their life principles, conditions would become worse in spite of all the laws man might make.

Utterly disgusted with the sights he had seen, and the example his cousin had given him, our hero left the youth in the midst of his revelry and hurried away to seek solace and comfort among his books. These silent yet eloquent

companions, seemed after his night of horror, all the more sweet and reassuring.

The pleasure and joys of Temptation City seemed empty indeed when exposed. He saw them in their true colors. They sickened him now and he longed to flee from them. On the morrow, however, he was to meet the greatest tempter which would try him as gold in the furnace. In one more day he would know what to do, either stay and adopt the life of the Age and his colleagues, or flee from the city and give up his search for Art.

"Beware the bowl; though rich and bright,
Its rubies flash upon the sight,
An adder coils its depths beneath,
Whose lure is woe, whose sting is death."

—A. B. Street.

THE SPIRIT OF PLEASURE

THE SPIRIT OF PLEASURE

Vice is a monster of so frightful mein,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
—Pope.

It is vanity to love that which passeth with all speed, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy remaineth.
—Thomas a' Kempis.

"I don't think we can keep our nephew Talent here with us," said the Age to his wife Laxity, a short time later. "He sees no joy in anythings that the world loves. He scorned all the inducements that I offered, and is determined to go through life with that companion Conscience whom he brought with him."

"It is annoying," answered the wife, "our daughter Frivolity failed to interest him, and she is such a lovable girl too. I fear he will pack up and leave our home and go back to that old-fashioned town where he came from."

"What a fool he is," continued the husband, "to disregard such opportunities which come but once in a lifetime. He ought to know that he can never make a living or achieve success with

such strict ideas of morality. The people today do not care for religion, they do not care for sermons, they do not care for virtue. What they want is material and sensual pleasure, and if he does not devote his life to this cause he is doomed to failure."

Laxity replied, "perhaps our other daughter who attracts every one else could also interest this nephew of ours. I think you started out wrongly with him. You shocked him with your lax moral code. You should have appealed to his artistic sense. He is an artist and has the soul of an artist. 'Pleasure' will surely charm him and who knows but what she will win him for her husband. If so you will have him for a son-in-law, and will have accomplished your designs, for then he will devote himself to your work."

Pleasure was the other daughter of the Age and Laxity, a gifted but extremely worldly young lady, whose name admirably denoted her only thought and ambition. She was very beautiful as to physical perfection, but she seemed to have no soul at all. Her main object in life was to enjoy one good time after the other, with never a spiritual or ennobling thought.

She was like her sister Frivolity in this respect that both sought pleasure as their final goal, but

she was unlike the younger girl inasmuch as she took the pains to find the greatest pleasure with the least amount of pain, while Frivolity's attitude was merely one of indifference.

She had been endowed by Nature, as I said, with bewitching beauty, and this beauty of the body she loved and sought, thinking nothing about the real beauty of the soul. The fact that her own immortal soul was the image of her Maker, while her body was but clay, made no impression on this worlding. She was blessed with indulgent parents who gave her all the money she could spend, so that her every whim had always been satisfied. She was a connoisseur in the selection of amusements and could usually choose those which would bring the greatest joy. Every new form of entertainment was eagerly sought and indulged.

This then was the character which was to become the guide of Talent, just as she has sought at times to be our guide in our passage through Temptation City. This was the being that should, according to plans of Laxity and the Age, become the life mate of Talent. How different their qualifications; how unlike their thoughts and ambitions; how widely apart must their life courses be! Talent lived for his soul, Pleasure seemed to have none at all—he loved the noble

side of man and the actions which made him more like his Maker, she loved only material, transient, joy-giving actions and disregarded the Creator—he sought the spiritual, she, the material. How could such a pair ever hope to reconcile their thoughts and sentiments? How could they hope to live together in harmony?

Talent was now led out into the great city, Temptation. Before his eyes passed all the amusements and delights which could cheer his young heart. All the beauties of an age given over to materialism were offered to him with the hope of making him also a child of the times. The most interesting plays and books were brought forward; the most expensive meals were prepared; the most charming companions were provided. In short every possible thing which Pleasure could procure was ordered for him, in the hope of diverting his mind and heart from the path of duty; with the intention of making him sacrifice his talents for Pleasure's cause and for the interests of the Age.

Pleasure appealed to him thus: "Remember you are young; you have a right to enjoy life in whatever way pleases you. You have been given rare gifts which are yours to use as you see fit. You have labored hard to acquire an education which is also your own property. What right

has Conscience or any one else to dictate to you or give you laws to follow. You are your own master.

"Now you are seeing life as it really is, for the first time in your career. You are seeing joys of which you did not dream before. You are beginning to enjoy this existence. You are by degrees giving way to the influence of the times, and it is perfectly right that you should. You are gradually becoming accustomed to these alluring surroundings. You are slowly yet surely yielding to the charms of Pleasure."

Talent tired to protest, but at the moment, life did seem very sweet in Temptation City, and the wonders of this life of ease and luxury appeared most enticing. The guiding influence of Conscience ever near at hand seemed now to be very far away. The young man was facing the greatest crisis of his life. He who had fought the open enemies of Art and Culture so bravely was giving way to this subtle charmer. He tried in vain to protest. Pleasure saw his struggle and urged on with her plea:

"You see how useless it is to fight against the spirit of the times. Art like everything else must conform to the laws laid down, and these laws are continually changing. Morality is what the people make it. As the ideas of the people are

constantly undergoing a change so must Art also change. If you do not contribute your literary and dramatic talents to the Age, you will be forever forced out of this beautiful region which you have learned to love. You will become an outcast, poor and friendless, an object not of pity but of scorn. Of what benefit will your education and talent be then? You will be a martyr to your own useless and profitless doctrine of rigorism and you will finally lay down your life in some place of exile, deploring your

condition and cursing your folly—
For the saddest words of tongue or pen
Are the sad, sad words—'it might have been."

As our hero listened to these words he began to doubt whether after all it would not be better to yield. The world looked very bright indeed and to give it up forever, as well as all his hopes for success, seemed very hard. He could not bear to think of losing his Art forever, and of becoming a failure. What would his parents say if he failed? What would all his friends and school mates say? He dreaded to hear their sneers and taunts. Perhaps he had been too conscientious. Would it be worse for him than for all the other artists before him who had

prostituted Art in the same way? Perhaps Pleasure was right.

The lights and laughter, the music and colors of the pagan palace in which his cousin Pleasure, was entertaining him, seemed very sweet indeed at this time. Even the feasting, the boisterous conduct and wanton abandon of the patrons of this palace of iniquity were beginning to appeal to him. And just when he was on the point of telling Pleasure that he had determined to join the forces of the Age, he saw something which made him hesitate. Above the wild orgy on every side, beyond the confusion of sensual pleasures, far above this feast of materialism, surpassing all the artificial beauty and attraction of Pleasure and the Spirit of the Age, there appeared a light bright in the midst of darkness and doubt, brighter by far than the glare of Temptation City; and in this new light there appeared the forms of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, dazzling in their brilliance. They seemed to be beckoning to Talent to join them, and encouraging him to persevere.

Louder than the sensual music and boisterous laughter in the resort came the words of Conscience. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night, the day thou canst not then be false to any man." Talent realized that the

struggle was over and that "he had fought the good fight." He thanked God for the victory and begged for strength for the future, for he knew that his work had just begun.

Perceiving the baseness of this spectacle of depravity as he never had before, he rushed past the detaining arms of Pleasure and away from the hideous Feast of Materialism. Out into the night he fled, past the bright lights of similar resorts, past the idle throngs seeking new diversions, past the theaters with their lurid posters and obscene pictures. He was so disgusted with everything which reminded him of the last few days that he determined to flee from the city and take refuge in the mountains. He yearned for peace and quiet and a chance to meditate on the hopelessness of the past and the possibilities of the future.

Talent saw clearly that he would never find in Temptation City the true object of his art, the expression of man's soul. Something seemed to assure him, however, that somewhere beyond the noise and bustle of the city, beyond the falseness and artificiality of man's creations, somewhere in peaceful solitude of God's country, he would eventually discover the ideal of his dreams, the spirit of Truth and Beauty.

THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAUTIFUL

THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAUTIFUL

Of beauty's wondrous fair thou art the fairest,
All maiden sweetness in thy heart thou bearest.

No earthly pleasure can I place above thee;
Sweet maiden, with the heav'n pure face,
I love thee.

—Clara L. Kneeland.

When Talent hurried away from Temptation City, he had no definite plans for the future. His one object was to get far away from the least suggestion of the influence of the Age. He had had his fill of adventure, he had seen life as Materialism views it, "through the dirty panes of a bar-room window." He wished to retire into the unexplored wilderness to commune with Nature and Nature's God.

He kept on until he reached a particularly wild and unexplored section of mountainous country, far removed from all traces of civilization, where the destructive hand of Progress had not as yet demolished the work of the Creator. Here there were no smokestacks to belch forth destructive fumes, no deafening shrieks of whistles to break the solemn stillness, and no shouts of a pleasure-mad race to

profane this sanctuary. Modern progress had not sewed "purple patches" on this garment of Nature—it was still in its original form, fresh from the hands of the Great Builder.

Here in a delightful spot on the side of a tall mountain, surrounded by the flowers and the birds, and all the beauties of Nature, Talent took up his abode. He needed nothing else. He found the most wonderful art in the blue sky above; the best literature in the unspoken descriptions of God's mountains and valleys; the sweetest music in the songs of the birds and the babbling of the brook; and the most sublime drama in the continuous succession of day and night, sunrise and sunset—in short in every wonderful shifting scene of this exquisite panorama.

Gradually the memory of the past died away and Talent became again the happy, care-free youth that he had been when he left his home so many weeks before. With the return of his former self, however, came also the longing for the expression of Art, and the desire to find a fitting medium for the expression of his literary ability. And then there came into his life the being whom he had sought so long in vain, the being who was to teach him true Art, the being who was to be his greatest inspiration.

One day after Talent had taken a long ramble through the forest, thinking always of his life work and its fulfillment, he grew weary and sank down upon a rock to rest. The solution of this difficult problem of his mission perplexed and tired him. As if in answer to his unspoken petition to Nature came the sound of music, most beautiful strains from a violin. Talent scarcely breathed; he felt as if he had been transplanted to another world. The invisible musician must be a genius, he thought, to produce such melodious sounds. The music came closer and now Talent, peering in the direction whence it proceeded, beheld a charming maiden about his own age.

She was a lovely young girl, more beautiful, thought Talent than any other being he had ever seen. She seemed like an angel. She kept on playing, coming closer to the spot where Talent stood, until she stopped directly in front of him. She ended her pretty melody and looked at the youth with a happy smile. Talent was amazed to see any human being in this secluded spot, especially one of such rare beauty as the creature who stood before him. He finally managed to ask the question, "Who are you?"

"I am called the Spirit of the Beautiful," she answered, and her voice was sweet and low, "I

am the embodiment of the beauty of the soul. I represent everything good in nature. I am an artist and a musician. I put down on canvas and express in music the message of the noble and sublime in the human soul. I express Art according to the purpose of the Creator."

"How delightful!" exclaimed Talent, "I have been looking for a being like you for ever so long. I searched through Temptation City in vain for you. I waited a long time in the studios of the Age, Materialism and Hypocrisy, hoping that you would come to me there. I sought you in the haunts of Pleasure and Frivolity, but all in vain. At length despairing of ever finding you, I ran away from Temptation City and came here to this lonely spot, determined to forget my Art and forsake my literary aspirations."

Beauty answered, "And coming to this pretty spot, taking up your abode in this region, which is called the 'Valley of Reflection' you have found me, whom you could never have found in Temptation City. I shun the Spirit of the Age and all his colleagues. Long ago I forsook the haunts of your cousins in the whirlpool of excitement and frivolity. I am the true child of Nature and it is only when communing with Nature that I can be found."

Perhaps you and I have also searched in vain

through Temptation City, amid noise and excitement and gayety, amid revels and riotings, for the Spirit of the Beautiful. And perhaps even you and I will one day find her, who is symbolical of peace and contentment and lasting joy, if we search in the valley of Reflection, even as Talent found the only being who could gladden his heart.

"Now, dear Spirit of Beauty," exclaimed Talent, "I will relate the dream I had a few nights ago, as I slumbered in the quiet valley of Reflection. I dreamt that in a few days I would meet you, that together we would go forth to preach the Resurrection of Art. As a medium to teach this grand and noble lesson to humanity, we chose a wonderful spectacle, a sort of play, in which our combined gifts were utilized, your painting and music, and my proficiency in literature and drama. Guided by some unseen force we produced what the world so sorely needs, a truly artistic drama. We brought about the complete revolution of modern Art, and gave people once more the proper idea of the meaning of this God-given blessing. It marked the final overthrow of the Age and all his forces."

"Why can we not make this dream come true? I feel as if it is a message from Above.

You represent beauty, I, genius. You have gifts in the departments of music and painting, while I possess literary and dramatic ability. Why can we not combine our gifts and collaborate on a great spectacle which in every sense of the word will be true Art?"

"I agree," responded Beauty, for she also felt that this was her life work, "this is why I am on earth. I must not keep my beauty to myself, but I must show it forth to the world, I must display before all the world the grandeur of the human soul and the message of Nature. The Age displays the picture of man in all his weakness, his sad failings, and often his moral decay. He delights in portraying the baseness of man's lower nature. I, who am the Spirit of the Beautiful, show man's spiritual nature, his loftier sentiments, his struggle and final victory over the enemies of his soul."

"But," answered Talent, "the hardest part of the mission, which we have taken upon ourselves, will be to make the people appreciate true Art. Many of the unfortunate followers of the times have been fed on the products of the Age and his friends, so long, that they are utterly incapable of appreciating truth or goodness. I fear our cause will meet with but little success."

Both were silent for a time busily engaged in

pondering on the hopelessness of their mission.

Suddenly they were startled to see before them a being clad in snow white garments, who looked at them kindly and said:

"I am the Spirit of Religion. I am the expression of God's love for creatures. I stand as mediator between the Creator and His creatures, and show man his duties towards the all-wise God, Who made him. The present age seeks to crush me under foot. It tries to ignore Him, Whom I represent, and consequently it scorns me also. The present age seeks its happiness in the transient things of earth, which are here today and gone tomorrow. The soul of man, the image of the Maker, is forgotten or ignored. The essence of all that is worth while in life, is cast aside.

"Without the benign influence of Religion, the world goes on in darkness, sinking lower and lower each year, inventing new forms of idle amusements and artificial joys, in a vain effort to still the craving for peace in the soul. These joys last but for a day, and the restless worldling is never at ease. Without my guidance and direction, Art, the one boon which makes this 'vale of tears' a trifle less dreary and desolate, becomes the victim of Materialism and Sensuality and is finally sacrificed on the altar

of Greed to furnish a flickle public with momentary pleasure.

"Without Religion, life is one long period of desolation, with no star shining above, to cheer man on his journey, with no flower blooming on his path, with no ray of sunshine to dispel the chilling gloom pressing down upon him. The man with no religion has nothing to live for, and nothing to die for.

"Now my children, Talent and Beauty, you who represent man's choicest gifts in the fine arts, you who stand for intellectual excellence and spiritual magnificence, you have a sacred mission to perform. Upon you rests the responsibility of teaching the world what God means by 'ART.' You must go forth and rescue the race from the subtle influence of the Age, and teach it, once more, the meaning of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, the Breath of Immortality.

"Remember this, that the world will never return to a proper realization of Art, whether it be in drama, music, painting, sculpture, literature or anything else, until it returns to the practice of religion. Without it there can be no inspiration to higher things. Without it Art can never be more than a hideous phantom, the plaything of perverted minds. Go forth, then,

my children, and preach your lesson, and may the GREAT ARTIST of NATURE be your inspiration,—and your guide."

Having given his message, the Spirit of Religion departed from the youth and maiden, leaving them to ponder on his words. Here was the answer to their difficulty. They must take Religion as their inspiration, motive and final goal. And in the heart of each was formed a firm resolution to remain faithful to the mission to which they had pledged themselves. Faith, hope and charity, those sweet spirits of a higher world, entered their souls; faith in the great Creator and His help, hope that their mission would be successful, and charity towards the Divine Lover, Who loved men so much; and towards His poor misguided creatures for whom they were to labor; creatures who, in spite of their frailty, were nevertheless images of the Maker.

And so must we recognize the influence of the Spirit of Religion. Even as Talent and Beauty saw and understood, that Religion makes all things worth while, and gives to life and labor a meaning, so we too must see and understand this lesson, and must harden not our hearts, when Religion would give us its sweet message.

THE TRIUMPH OF ART

THE TRIUMPH OF ART

O Artist! blessed with the rarest gifts of Nature, thou on whom depends the production of the book, the play, the picture and the song; look for thy inspiration above the sordid depths of material things; seek thy motives in the brightness and sweetness of the spiritual, in the exquisite beauty of the soul, in the sublime image of the Divine.

—The Author.

Shortly after the events just narrated Talent started out for the home of Beauty. She lived in the lovely valley of Contentment, not far from Talent's own temporary dwelling in the valley of Reflection. The locality in which Beauty dwelt was endowed by Nature with the most exquisite charms imaginable. Beauty lived with her mother, Prudence, in a dainty little cottage at the foot of the mountain. It was a fitting habitation for such a lovely creature.

Nature's handiwork in the pretty valley of Contentment had not been disturbed by either mother or daughter. They had not destroyed the beauty of the landscape to erect artificial things which a modern civilization demanded. Nature held sway there, and peace and quiet reigned supreme, uninterrupted save by the chirp

of a bird or the gay laughter of the happy little maiden who called this her home.

Talent was delighted with the pleasant valley of Contentment and especially with the fair maiden, Beauty, whom he had loved at first sight. She was different than all the rest of the young ladies he had met. He contrasted her with the two fickle daughters of the Age. How different they were! They were selfish, worldly, lazy, frivolous and inconsiderate. She on the other hand was his ideal in everything; humble, prudent, industrious, talented and a lover of the spiritual. He thought she was the most wonderful being on earth and he loved her tenderly.

Nor could Beauty conceal her admiration and affection for the gifted Talent. He seemed to her the personification of uprightness, honesty, purity and nobility. He too was different than the young men of her acquaintance, vastly different from the men in Temptation City, Hypocrisy, Sensuality, Materialism and Intemperance. He was a model young man and she idolized him.

Talent soon became a regular caller at the little house of Beauty, and there began a delightful time of courtship. Would that I had the time to relate the pleasant meetings of these two children of Nature. These two creatures in whom the image of the Maker shone forth in all

its brilliance, these two innocent young people whom God had chosen to carry the message of true Art to a perverted race, these two gifted beings loving the same noble objects and cherishing the same high ideals, these two must needs have fallen in love with each other. It seemed as if they had been made for one another, and so when Talent some time later asked the gentle maiden to become his bride, she blushingly consented.

A few months later a quiet wedding was celebrated in the little parish church. The good priest whom I have called Spirit of Religion performed the ceremony, and he knew better than anyone present how wonderful are the ways of Providence, who had brought these two souls together that they might start their sacred work for the rejuvenation of a fallen Art.

As soon as the simple festivities of the wedding were over, Talent and Beauty set to work on the masterpiece, which was to teach men the great lesson of God's goodness, the production which was to revive man's taste for true Art. It was to be both literature and music, both art and drama, combining, as Talent had seen it in his dream, the gifts of both. Talent wrote the story which was then adapted to the stage. Beauty composed the music to accompany this play,

painted suitable scenes, and designed the costumes. Both labored for many months to complete the spectacle. Nothing in this world can be obtained without effort, and the more excellent the thing is which we seek, the greater will be the necessity for earnest and persevering labor. These artists realized this and exerted themselves to the utmost to produce a real masterpiece.

At length the great play was completed and arrangements for its presentation were under way. It was to be given under the management of an old friend of the parish priest in a new theatre in Temptation City. The public was informed of the venture through proper advertisements, and all the details for its presentation were arranged. Talent had not visited the famous metropolis since the night when he rushed away from Pleasure and hurried off to the mountains. Now in company with his young wife he returned to witness the first performance of their masterpiece.

The Spirit of the Age and his assistants had gone on producing their nonsense and filth for the public, and had grown wealthier and bolder each week, for the public was willing to pay for anything that suited their depraved taste. The Age and his family had kept themselves well in-

formed about the activities of Talent after his sudden departure from their home. They had heard of his sojourn in the valley of Reflection and of his marriage to Beauty. Later came the news also of his new play, which if successful would mean the end of their own illegitimate trade in base productions. Their anger and disappointment knew no bounds, and they determined to exert all their forces to defeat the new venture.

After a consultation with his advisers, chief among which were Materialism, Realism and Sensuality, the Age determined to give the public a new play on the same night which marked the first performance of Talent's production. It was to be given in the Temple of the Times theatre right across the street from the New Theatre in which "The Triumph of Art" was presented. The Age would, as he said, draw the crowds to his own spectacle and defeat the plans of Talent. He meant to make evil triumph over good.

The spectacle which the Age had chosen to run in competition with our hero's play was called "The Triumph of Mammon." It was a musical comedy of the lowest type, a despicable combination of immoral scenes, dances and music. It was the most daring thing of its kind that had ever been flaunted in the face of decency. It was

impossible to call the thing Art, yet it was "what the people want;" it was the kind of entertainment which the Age had taught the people to love. With this hideous performance going on across the street from where the new play of Talent was presented the Age hoped to crush his nephew and ruin all hope of future success for his mission.

The time came for the performances to begin. The fickle pleasure-loving element, by far in the majority, rushed to the "Temple of the Times" to see the play of the Age. Inside all was gay and bright. No money had been spared to make the play a most elaborate presentation. Music, scenic effects, lights, costumes and all the necessary details helped to make this play most pleasing to the patrons. Baseness was the secret of success in the production. The immense audience seemed delighted and applauded uproariously, as one abominable scene followed the other. Life was at its height. The Age had given the public his "masterpiece."

Quite a different sight met the spectator's eyes across the street at the New Theatre, where a real work of Art was being given to the public. The play, called "The Triumph of Art" was a pleasant spectacle of Nature in communion with its God. The scenery was not painted in gaudy,

artificial colors, but was modest, natural, and pleasing to the eye. The music was not suggestive, syncopated strains, but low, sweet and melodious, stirring one's very soul and lifting it to higher things. Its characters were not represented as debased and degraded human beings, but as high-minded, noble men and women who reflected the image of the Divine. Its theme was not a false improbable story appealing to the sordid imaginations of a perverted people, but the simple story of Man's struggle toward perfection, and the triumph of his better self.

"The Triumph of Art" represented the eternal struggle between good and evil forces, from which the good finally emerged, victorious. It represented vice, but did not idealize it. Vice was shorn of its glamour and grandeur, and made to look ugly. One could not help but hate it from the picture drawn. Goodness was not silly and sentimental but strong and noble. The play was a spectacle which "left no bad taste in the mouth" so to say, but which was bound to elevate the mind to higher things. It undoubtedly made the audience better men and women for having witnessed it. The few that attended on that first night, though they could hardly be suddenly transformed in one night, nevertheless saw the vast difference between this performance

and those of the Age. The ugly spectacles presented in the Temple of the Times appeared all the more revolting when contrasted with this elevating drama. Gradually the audience saw and understood the message of Nature, the meaning of Art, and they resolved never more to patronize the productions of Age.

Let us now return to the orgy of the Age on the other side of the street. The greatest scene of the play, depicting the feast of Mammon, was just being presented. It was the wildest riot of sensuality and debauchery ever depicted on any stage. Suddenly in the midst of the scene, there occurred a terrible explosion on the stage which shook the very foundations of the huge building and scattered pieces of burning debris in all directions. It seemed as if outraged Nature had avenged this insult to Art. Most of the performers were horribly burnt before they could look for a place of escape. The rest of the house was turned into a pandemonium of struggling human beings making a desperate fight to reach the exits. Everything was forgotten save the one desire to extricate themselves from this fiery furnace. Great throngs of people were crushed and suffocated at the doors, others met their deaths in the ravaging flames, which soon enveloped the whole place.

The proud uncle of Talent, the Spirit of the Age who had occupied a box during the play, at the first alarm attempted to pass out with the crowd, but the congestion at the exits prevented his escape. Seeing no means of egress he turned back into the fiery furnace, and being shortly overcome by smoke he fell to the floor surrounded on every side by the human wrecks whom he had perverted. The mob in its frenzy trampled on him and the raging flames of Retribution claimed him for their own. The walls had been so weakened by the fearful explosion that very soon after the first wild cry of alarm, the Temple of the Times collapsed and buried the unfortunate inmates beneath the ruins.

The Age had given the public his final spectacle. He had prepared for them the most exciting exhibition he could invent, but he had not reckoned that Providence could provide one still more exciting, fearful beyond description. He had intended the play to be a comedy—Providence had turned it into a tragedy. All his life the Age had perverted the public taste. All his life he had fed the people intellectual poison and moral filth. He had destroyed their ideals and their conceptions of true Art, and always had his excuse been, "the people want it." Now both he and his colleagues, the originating spirits, and they,

the unfortunate dupes lay side by side under the ruins of the Temple of the Times.

The terrible calamity which had brought to such an abrupt ending the "Triumph of Mammon" made a marked impression on the rest of the people of Temptation City. Those who had been spared began to thank God for His mercy and to look about them again for a trace of the old faith which they had spurned. Frequently a catastrophe such as this is necessary to awaken the public conscience. People began to see the error of their ways and repentence followed. They sought once more the religion of their forefathers, which had not exerted any influence on their lives for so many years. With this reform came also the return of love and admiration for real Art, such as expressed by the wonderful play of Talent and Beauty. Gradually the crowds turned away from the salacious dramas and turned to the New Theatre, and after that the house was filled at every performance.

Slowly too the Spirit of Religion, the zealous parish priest, who had given our hero and heroine such encouragement before their great venture, began to exercise a wider and more marked influence upon the people. Many of them returned to the saving faith and eagerly sought the help and guidance of the prudent priest, whom

they had formerly despised. The effect of this return to the old faith was noticeable in every phase of the city's life, but particularly in the fine arts. The public had to be prepared for a spectacle like the one Talent and Beauty had brought there. Now that the city had reformed, the play proved to be what the name implied—"The Triumph of Art." New and hitherto unheard-of artists sprang up, for they felt that their efforts would now be appreciated. Art, the expression of Nature, the breath of the Divine, became the watchword of the day. Talent and Beauty who had inaugurated this reformation in artistic productions, looked upon the result with the greatest satisfaction, inwardly thanking God for this triumph.

The transformation in the city of Temptation was complete and permanent. The name of the city was changed to Victory, and ever after it proved to the world that it had won the greatest "victory" possible over the Spirits of the Age, Materialism, Irreligion, and Atheism. In front of the court house the citizens erected a huge granite slab with the following inspiring words inscribed, as a message to every young man and woman who chanced to pass:

The best law—the golden rule.
The best education—self-knowledge.

The best statesmanship—self-government.
The best engineering—a bridge of faith over the river of death.

There is little more to tell. Talent took his wife and went back to the little village of Tranquility, the town of his birth. Joyful indeed was the meeting between the parents, Toil and Self-Sacrifice, and their son. They were very proud and happy that their only son had proved himself every inch a man, that he had been faithful to their admonitions, and worthy of the love and devotion they had bestowed upon him. They also admired and loved the charming young wife of Talent, for her good qualities were many, and the prudent parents knew she would make an admirable life mate.

In the peaceful little village of Tranquility, Talent and his wife, Beauty took up their abode, where they lived for many a day in contentment and bliss, loving all and beloved by all. Neither did they give up the noble work they had begun. They continued to produce literary and dramatic productions, artistic and musical masterpieces, giving the public very frequently a new work of Art. Each product of their brains was as a ser-

mon from on High, a mesage of love, mercy, consolation, verily a breath of the Divine.

Beautiful eyes are those that show
Beautiful thoughts that burn below;
Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds;
Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest and brave and true,
Moment by moment the whole day through.

—Selected.

Beauty is the mark God sets on virtue. Every natural action is graceful. Every heroic action is also decent and causes the place and the by-standers to shine.

—R. W. Emerson.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Love aids the hero, bids ambition rise
To nobler heights, inspire immortal deeds,
E'en softens brutes, and adds a grace to virtue.
—Thompson.

Now this story would not be complete if I did not tell you what happened finally to the various characters.

The Spirit of the Age and his colleagues, Materialism and the rest, met their deaths in the terrible conflagration which destroyed the Temple of the Times theatre, and marked the beginning of a new era in Temptation City. It was fitting that these evil geniuses should meet their end in the last exhibition of Godlessness which their diseased minds had invented. It was necessary for the complete transformation of the city that these evil spirits be forever destroyed.

Laxity, the wife of the Age, whom we remember as the foolish indulgent mother of the wayward cousins of Talent, only realized in her old age her grave responsibility toward her children. Then it was too late. She died in despair vainly trying to correct the morals of her children, which all her life she had quietly ignored. In

the end she had not even a home, for the worldly children cast her off and she became destitute and heartbroken.

The children, as you no doubt remember, were the Spirit of Self, Hypocrisy, Sensuality, Intemperance, Frivolity and Pleasure, none of whom made a success of life ,even as the world sees it.

Self, who had never done a kind act to anyone without receiving a reward, he who had observed but one creed, that of Self above all, even after all his solicitude for a succesful career, met reverses in business and became destitute. As he could claim no friends, he became a beggar, and at the end of his life he was very glad to receive a bite to eat from the very people whom he had formerly scorned.

Sensuality who had lived only to satsify his lower desires, was punished by Nature as he deserved. He contracted a loathesome disease, later became insane and died in miserable agony in an asylum. He who violates Nature's sacred laws, invariably suffers for his crimes even in this life.

Hypocrisy learned to his bitter regret that the world in time refused to be deceived, and as soon as he appeared in his true colors he lost his position in society and his business. He died in obscurity.

Intemperance who made the wine cup his God, descended the ladder of respectability by leaps and bounds, until he became nothing but a common "drunk." Finally after engaging in a drunken brawl with a companion, he shot him, and ended his miserable existence behind prison bars.

The daughters of this unfortunate family did little better than their brothers. Frivolity married a husband as idle and fickle as herself, and neither understood nor cared for the duties and obligations of married life. Death found her in an idle amusement, and her aimless existence ended without a thought of future retribution.

Pleasure, whose one aim had been to enjoy herself also married, but her life was not happy. Her spells of melancholy and depression became longer as time went on, and her life was marked by frequent visits to the divorce court. Her various husbands added no comfort or love or happiness to her life.

Now for the brighter side of my story—

The good priest, Spirit of Religion continually widened his influence. Converts flocked to him by the hundreds and received his kindly advice and salutary ministrations. People, who for

years had lived in Temptation City with never a thought of their Creator or their duties toward Him, now returned to the saving faith, and soon there was again "one flock and one shepherd."

Toil and Self-Sacrifice, the loving parents of our hero, lived to a good age, happy and contented with the thought that they had done their duty. They were proud of their son, and justly so, for he had shown himself to be one among many, a leader among men, and they were largely responsible for his good deeds. They died in peace with God and man.

Talent and Beauty lived for many years in the peaceful little village of Tranquility, performing their God-given labors and affecting much good. God blessed their union with sons and daughters, whom they raised and educated in the fear and love of the Creator. They gave to the world many literary and dramatic productions as well as numerous works of Art in painting and music.

Finally in their old age, Talent and Beauty staged a revival of the famous play with which they had opened their sacred mission in the field of Art, namely "The Triumph of Art."

The revival of this great masterpiece was an event that will always be remembered by the good people. It was carefully recorded in the annals of the city. At the end of its presenta-

tion, Talent and Beauty, now growing old, were asked to appear on the stage, and after each had spoken a few appropriate words to the enthusiastic audience, Talent responded to the generous encore by relating the story of his silver chest and the motto he had chosen for himself through life. The inspiration and guidance which he had received from the encouraging lines of the poet were bequeathed to the rising generation of the time. Talent said:

"Let each young man and woman in this city take as his or her motto the gem, which proved so beneficial to me:

"To thine own self be true
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

"And," he continued, "to accompany my legacy to the world of Art, my literary and dramatic productions, and those of my dear wife, Beauty, in the fields of painting and music, allow me to bestow also these touching words of the poet:

Lift, O Christian, lift thine eyes
To thy home beyond the skies
Eternal bliss awaits thee there,
With which earth's joys cannot compare.

And later on, when both Talent and Beauty had gone to the great Beyond, to receive the re-

ward "which God has prepared for those who love Him," the people honored their memory by erecting a worthy monument. The sight of this substantial mark of the people's gratitude and esteem, kept their memory green, and their names revered. The people, too, remained faithful to the lofty and sublime lessons, which Talent and Beauty had taught.

The most fitting expression of regard for these gifted artists, was the well-chosen inscription carved on the monument:

A good book, a beautiful picture, or a sweet song is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.—Milton.

The End.

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